

Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei

# Singapore (Chapter)

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**Coverage includes:** Sights, Activities, Courses, Festivals & Events, Eating, Drinking, Entertainment, Shopping and Survival Guide.

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# Singapore

POP 5.3 MILLION / 710 SQ KM

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## Best Places to Eat

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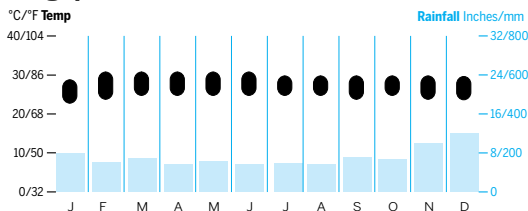
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## Why Go?

Love it or loathe it, Singapore is hard to ignore. It's a long-haul stopover staple and Southeast Asia's overachiever. It's also the perfect antidote to the region's trademark grit. But if you think Singapore is little more than endless malls and regulations, get set for a rethink. In recent years, the city-state has been revamping itself as Asia's new 'it kid', subverting staid stereotypes with cutting-edge architecture, dynamic museums and hip boutiques. Some of the world's hottest creatives have set up shop on these steamy streets, from celebrity New York chefs to fashion-forward local designers. Beyond the new and the hyped is a well-worn brew of Chinese, Malay, Indian and Western traditions, of hypnotic temples, gut-rumbling food markets and pockets of steamy jungle. Admit it: Asia's uptight geek is just a little cooler than you ever gave it credit for.

## When to Go

### Singapore



**Feb** Singapore celebrates Chinese New Year with fireworks, dragon parades and buzzing night markets.

**May** Bag some grin-worthy bargains at the Great Singapore Sale, launched annually in late May.

**Sep** Hotels are scarce and pricey, but speed demons will love the after-dark Formula One.



## Singapore Highlights

- 1 Bollyjamming your way through thumping **Little India** (p485)
- 2 Exploring Straits Chinese culture at the **Peranakan**

**Museum** (p477) or the **Asian Civilisations Museum** (p477)

- 3 Cold beer and street food feasting at a local **hawker centre** (p519)

- 4 Hanging out with the wild ones at **Singapore Zoo** (p493), **Night Safari** (p494) and the brand-new **River Safari** (p495)



**5** Mall-hopping along fabled shopping strip **Orchard Rd** (p535)

**6** Rampaging through greenery at **Bukit Timah Nature Reserve** (p494)

**7** Losing your breath on the world's tallest duelling roller coasters at **Universal Studios** (p498)

**8** Catching a bumboat to time-warped **Pulau Ubin** (p494)

## History

Singapore has hardly looked back since Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles stepped into the mud in 1819 hell-bent on making the island a bastion of the British Empire. Despite a few ups and downs – invasion by the Japanese in WWII and getting booted out of the nascent federation of Malaysia in 1965 – the island has prospered in its role as a free-trade hub for Southeast Asia.

Yet despite a GDP growth rate of 14.9% in 2010 (number three in the world), the general election of 2011 delivered the highest proportion of contested seats (94.3%) since Singapore's independence in 1965. The election outcome saw the ruling People's Action Party (PAP) lose 6.46% of the electorate; in 2006, the party lost 8.69% of votes. The biggest gains went to the rival Worker's Party (WP), whose agenda better reflected concerns on the street, from housing affordability to an increasingly strained healthcare and transport system.

The strain is hardly surprising: Singapore's population has more than doubled from 2.4 million in 1980 to 5.1 million in 2011, mostly due to immigration. At 9.5 births per 1000 people, Singapore itself has one of the world's lowest birthrates. It's a fact not lost on Singapore's anxious government, which has offered everything from baby bonus tax breaks to government-subsidised speed dating events and salsa dance classes for singles. In the lead up to National Day in 2012, even mint-maker Mentos got in on the act, releasing a cheeky, viral tune with lyrics including: 'It's National Night and I want a baby, boo, I know you want it, so does the SDU (Social Development Unit)'. In typical Singaporean style, the video came with an important disclaimer, stating that only 'financially secure adults in stable, committed, long-term relationships should participate'.



## Sights

Singapore's main city area is located on the southern part of the island. Here you'll find the Singapore River, flanked by Boat Quay, Clarke Quay and Robertson Quay. South of the river lie the CBD (Central Business District) and Chinatown, while immediately north of the river is the Colonial (also referred to as the Civic) District. Further north is Little India and Kampong Glam, while east of Kampong Glam you'll find Geylang, Katong (Joo Chiat), East Coast Park and Changi. Northwest of the Colonial



## ADDRESSES

Singapore is well laid-out, with sign-posted streets and logically numbered buildings. Most addresses are preceded by the number of the floor and then the shop or apartment number. Addresses do not quote the district or suburb. For example, 05-01, the Heeren, 260 Orchard Rd, is outlet No 01 on the 5th floor of the Heeren building at 260 Orchard Rd.

District is Orchard Road, while further west still lie the Singapore Botanic Gardens, and expat enclaves Dempsey Hill and Holland Village. At the river's mouth is Marina Bay, while further southwest lies Sentosa Island. Central-north Singapore is where you'll find Singapore Zoo and Night Safari.

## COLONIAL DISTRICT, THE QUAYS & MARINA BAY

The Colonial District is Singapore's showcase district, adorned with elegant heritage architecture, trademark vistas and many of the city-state's top museums. On the river you'll find Boat Quay, Clarke Quay and Robertson Quay, three once-gritty trading areas revamped as buzzing eating, drinking and nightlife hubs. East of the Quays, the river spills into Marina Bay, an ambitious new precinct where bold architectural statements meet a Jetsons-esque casino resort and Singapore's striking new Gardens by the Bay.



## National Museum of Singapore

MUSEUM

(Map p478; [www.nationalmuseum.sg](http://www.nationalmuseum.sg); 93 Stamford Rd; adult/child \$S10/5; ☎history gallery 10am-6pm, living galleries 10am-8pm; 🚶Dhoby Ghaut) Imaginative, prodigiously stocked and brilliantly designed, Singapore's National Museum is good enough to warrant two visits. Staid exhibitions are ditched for lively, multimedia galleries that bring Singapore's action-packed bio to vivid life. It's a colourful, intimate journey, peppered with historical artefacts, personal accounts, and evocative reconstructions that span everything from Singapore's ancient Malay royals to colonial-era backstabbing, 20th-century rioting and reinvention, hawker food, fashion and film.

Part of the museum is housed in a superb 19th-century neoclassical building. Capped



by a breathtaking, stained-glass rotunda, the building was home to the former Raffles Museum and Library.

### **TOP CHOICE** Asian Civilisations

#### **Museum**

MUSEUM

(Map p478; [www.acm.org.sg](http://www.acm.org.sg); 1 Empress Pl; adult/child S\$8/4, half price after 7pm Fri; ☉1-7pm Mon, 9am-7pm Tue-Thu, Sat & Sun, 9am-9pm Fri; 🚶Raffles Place) The remarkable Asian Civilisations Museum houses Southeast Asia's most comprehensive collection of pan-Asian treasures. Its 11 beautifully curated galleries explore the history, cultures and religions of Southeast Asia, China, the Asian subcontinent and Islamic West Asia, with a multitude of ancient carvings, weaponry, glittering jewels and textiles. Add to this top-notch temporary exhibitions, and you have yourself one seriously satisfying cultural date.

### **TOP CHOICE** Peranakan Museum

MUSEUM

(Map p478; [www.peranakanmuseum.sg](http://www.peranakanmuseum.sg); 39 Armenian St; adult/child S\$6/3, free admission 7-9pm Fri; ☉1-7pm Mon, 9.30am-7pm Tue-Sun, to 9pm Fri; 🚶City Hall) Stylish, interactive and thoroughly engrossing, Singapore's newest museum stands as a testament to the Peranakan (Straits-born locals) cultural revival in the Lion City. Explore 10 thematic galleries for

an insight into both traditional and contemporary Peranakan culture, from marriage and folklore, to fashion and food. Artefacts include exquisite textiles, furniture and engaging multimedia displays.

### **Singapore Art Museum**

MUSEUM

(Map p478; ☎6332 3222; [www.singaporeartmuseum.sg](http://www.singaporeartmuseum.sg); 71 Bras Basah Rd; adult/student & senior S\$10/5, admission free 6-9pm Fri; ☉10am-7pm Sat-Thu, 10am-9pm Fri; 🚶Bras Basah) SAM showcases mostly modern and contemporary Southeast Asian art, from painting and sculpture, to site-specific installations and video art. The Wu Guanzhong gallery features a rotating exhibition of S\$70 million worth of art donated by the father of modern Chinese painting. Round the corner from SAM, the art museum's newer extension, **8Q SAM** (Map p478; [www.singart.com/8qsam](http://www.singart.com/8qsam); 8 Queen St; admission free with SAM ticket; ☉10am-7pm Sat-Thur, 10am-9pm Fri; 🚶City Hall or Bras Basah), delivers quirky installations, interactivity and (more) contemporary creations.

### **Gardens by the Bay**

PARK

([www.gardensbythebay.org.sg](http://www.gardensbythebay.org.sg); 18 Marina Gardens Drive; admission free, conservatories adult/child S\$28/15, skyway S\$5/3; ☉5am-2am, conservatories & skyway 9am-9pm; last ticket sales conservatories 8pm, skyway 8pm Mon-Fri, 7pm Sat & Sun;

## QUAYS OF THE CITY

The stretch of the riverfront that separates the Colonial District from the CBD is known as the Quays. The Singapore River, once a thriving gateway for bumboats bearing cargo into the *godown* (warehouses) that lined the riverside, now connects the three quays together. A walk through the Quays offers a revealing view to the changes that have impacted Singapore's trade through the years: from the dirt and grit of the once-filthy waterways to the gleaming steel and glass of today's financial district. To get a rundown on the area's history, visit the Asian Civilisations Museum.

**Boat Quay** (Map p478; 🚶Raffles Place) Closest to the former harbour, Boat Quay was once Singapore's centre of commerce, remaining an important economic area into the 1960s. By the mid-1980s, many of the shophouses were in ruins, businesses having shifted to hi-tech cargo centres elsewhere on the island. Declared a conservation zone by the government, the area has reinvented itself as a major entertainment district packed with restaurants, bars, and thirsty suits.

**Clarke Quay** (Map p478; 🚶Clarke Quay) Named after Singapore's second colonial governor, Sir Andrew Clarke, pastel-hued Clarke Quay has become one of Singapore's most popular after-dark haunts, packed with restaurants, bars and clubs (those with the longest queues are usually the best). It's a love-it-or-loathe-it affair, pimped with gumdrop railings done out in kids' paintbox colours, lily pad umbrellas straight out of a Dr Seuss book, and many once-dignified shophouses now painted in ultrabright shades.

**Robertson Quay** (☎64, 123, 143, Clarke Quay) At the furthest reach of the river, low-key Robertson Quay was once used for the storage of goods. Now some of the old godown have been sexed-up into bars and glitzy members-only party places. You'll also find several good restaurants and hotels clustered around here.







## Colonial District & the Quays

### 📍 Top Sights

Asian Civilisations Museum .....	E5
National Museum of Singapore .....	D2
Peranakan Museum .....	D3

### 📍 Sights

1 8Q SAM .....	F2
2 Abundance .....	G4
Art-2 Gallery .....	(see 65)
3 Battle Box Museum .....	C2
4 Between Sea & Sky .....	G4
5 Bird .....	E6
6 Boat Quay .....	E6
7 Clarke Quay .....	C4
8 Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay .....	G5
9 First Generation .....	F6
10 Fort Canning Park .....	C3
Gajah Gallery .....	(see 65)
11 Homage to Newton .....	E6
12 Millennium .....	E6
13 Raffles Hotel .....	F3
14 Reclining Figures .....	D6
15 Seed .....	G5
16 Singapore Art Museum .....	E2
17 Six Brushstrokes .....	H4
18 St Andrew's Cathedral .....	F4

### 📍 Activities, Courses & Tours

19 Duck Tour .....	G3
20 G-Max Reverse Bungy & GX-5 Extreme Swing .....	D4
21 Hippo River Cruise .....	D4
22 Singapore River Cruise .....	C4
True Fitness .....	(see 71)
23 Willow Stream .....	F3

### 📍 Sleeping

24 Five Stones Hostel .....	D5
25 Fort Canning Hotel .....	C2
26 Fullerton Bay Hotel .....	F6
27 Fullerton Hotel .....	F6
28 Gallery Hotel .....	A4
29 Naumi .....	G2
30 Raffles Hotel .....	F3
31 Ritz-Carlton Millenia Singapore .....	H4
32 Robertson Quay Hotel .....	B4

### 📍 Eating

33 Chef Chan's Restaurant .....	D2
34 Coriander Leaf .....	C4
35 DB Bistro Moderne .....	H6

Din Tai Fung .....	(see 69)
36 Flutes at the Fort .....	D4
37 Jaan .....	F3
38 Jumbo Seafood .....	C5
39 Kopitiam .....	E2
40 My Humble House .....	G4
41 Peach Garden .....	E6
42 Pizzeria Mozza .....	H7
43 Raffles City .....	F3
44 Saveur .....	F2
45 Wah Lok .....	F2
46 Yet Con .....	G2
47 YY Kafei Dian .....	G2

### 📍 Drinking

48 Bar & Billiard Room .....	F3
49 Brewerkz .....	C5
50 Brussels Sprouts Belgian Beer & Mussels .....	A4
51 Cuba Libre .....	C5
Harry's .....	(see 56)
Lantern Bar .....	(see 26)
Long Bar .....	(see 68)
52 Loof .....	F2
53 Molly Malone's .....	E6
New Asia .....	(see 37)
54 Next Page .....	B3
55 Paulaner Bräuhaus .....	H3
56 Penny Black .....	E6
Raffles Hotel .....	(see 30)

### 📍 Entertainment

57 Butter Factory .....	F6
58 Crazy Elephant .....	D4
59 Home Club .....	D5
60 Singapore Dance Theatre .....	D3
61 Singapore Repertory Theatre .....	B4
62 Singapore Symphony Orchestra .....	G5

### 📍 Shopping

Cape of Good Hope Art Gallery ...	(see 65)
63 Cathay Photo .....	E4
64 Funan DigitalLife Mall .....	E4
John 3:16 .....	(see 64)
65 MICA Building .....	D4
66 Peninsula Plaza .....	E4
67 Raffles City .....	F3
68 Raffles Hotel Arcade .....	F3
69 Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands .....	H7
70 Society of Black Sheep .....	H6
71 Suntec City .....	G3

**Bayfront**) Catapulting nature into the future, Gardens by the Bay is the latest blockbuster attraction at Marina Bay and Singapore's newest botanic gardens. At present, only the Bay Garden South section is open. Highlights here include soaring, sci-fi 'supertrees' and futuristic conservatories housing plants from endangered habitats. The Heritage Gardens are inspired by Singapore's multicultural DNA. Check the website for project updates.

### Raffles Hotel

HISTORIC BUILDING

(Map p478; [www.affleshotel.com](http://www.affleshotel.com); 1 Beach Rd; **M**City Hall) Birthplace of the Singapore Sling, and featured in novels by Joseph Conrad and Somerset Maugham, the grand old Raffles started life in 1887 as a 10-room bungalow fronted by the (since land-filled) beach. On the third floor of the Raffles Hotel Arcade, the **Raffles Hotel Museum** holds a fascinating collection of memorabilia documenting the hotel's gilded age.

### Fort Canning Park

PARK

(Map p478; **M**Dhoby Ghaut) When Raffles rolled into Singapore in 1819, locals steered clear of Fort Canning Hill, then called Bukit Larangan (Forbidden Hill), out of respect for the sacred shrine of Sultan Iskandar Shah, ancient Singapura's last ruler. Today, you can glimpse 14th-century Javanese artefacts at the park's archaeological dig, get a natural high in the park's spice garden, and snoop around WWII bunkers at the **Battle Box Museum** (Map p478; [www.legendsfortcanning.com/fortcanning/battlebox.htm](http://www.legendsfortcanning.com/fortcanning/battlebox.htm); 2 Cox Terrace; adult/child S\$8/5; ☀10am-6pm, last entry 5pm).

### Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

ARTS CENTRE

(Map p478; ☎6828 8377; [www.esplanade.com](http://www.esplanade.com); 1 Esplanade Dr; ☀10am-6pm, box office noon-8.30pm; **M**Esplanade) Poster-boy for contemporary Singapore, this S\$600-million arts complex has been compared to flies' eyes, melting honeycomb and two upturned durians. The controversial aluminium shades reference Asian reed-weaving geometries and maximise natural light. There's a nonstop program of international and local performances, some great restaurants and free outdoor performances.

### Singapore Flyer

OBSERVATION WHEEL

([www.singaporeflyer.com.sg](http://www.singaporeflyer.com.sg); 30 Raffles Ave; adult/senior/child S\$29.50/23.60/20.65; ☀8.30am-10.15pm; **M**Promenade) Following the lead of other world cities, Singapore has pipped its skyline with a giant Ferris wheel. And in typical Singaporean style, its version is currently the world's largest. The pricey 30-minute ride offers dizzying views towards the Colonial District, CBD, Marina Bay, the high-rise housing landscape to the east and out to the boat-heavy South China Sea.

### Kuan Im Thong

#### Hood Cho Temple

BUDDHIST TEMPLE

(Map p486; 178 Waterloo St; ☀6am-6.15pm; **M**Bugis) Dedicated to the goddess of mercy Kuan Yin (Guanyin), this is one of Singapore's busiest temples. Flower sellers, fortune tellers and incense-wielding devotees swarm around the entrance, the latter also rubbing the belly of

## SINGAPORE IN...

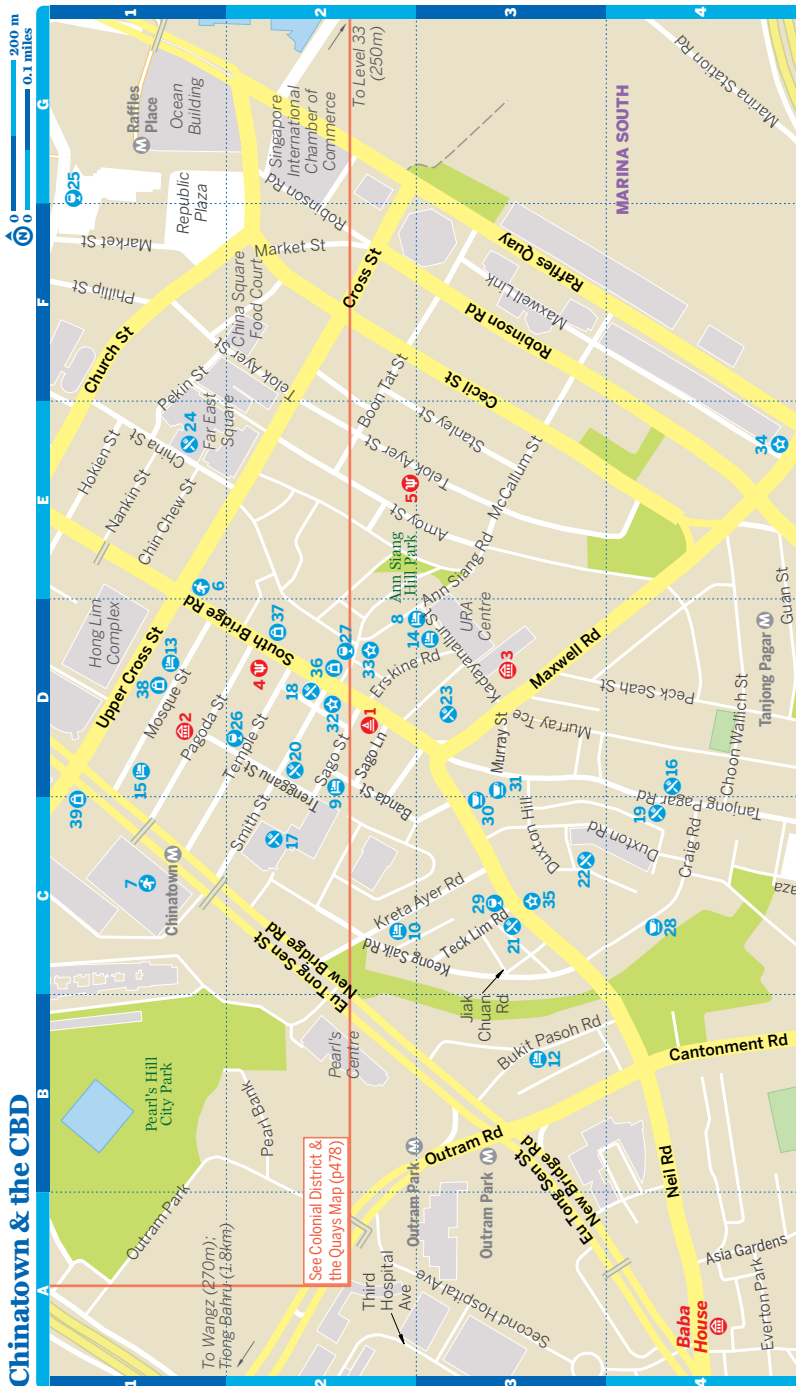
### Two Days

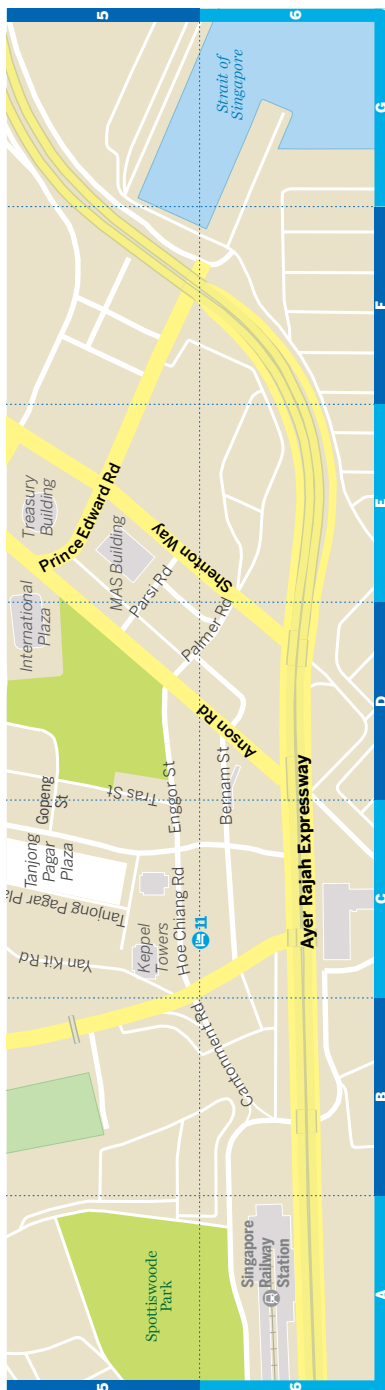
Start your Singapore fling with some cultural insight at the **Asian Civilisations Museum**, **National Museum of Singapore** or **Peranakan Museum**. Posh nosh at **Flutes at the Fort**, then check out Chinatown's **Sri Mariamman Temple** and **Buddha Tooth Relic Temple**. Treat your feet at **Mr Lim Foot Reflexology**, dine at **Blue Ginger** and slurp mojitos at rooftop **La Terrazza**. Start day two in **Little India** – breakfast at **Anand Bhavan** and shop at **Tekka Centre** and **Mustafa Centre**. If you're on a roll, mall-hop **Orchard Rd** or browse boutiques on **Haji Lane**. Alternatively, escape to **Singapore Zoo** before 'going wild' at the **Night Safari**.

### Four Days

Take an early morning stroll along the **Southern Ridges** before catching the cable car to **Sentosa**. Chow at **Malaysian Food Street**, then hit the rides at **Universal Studios**. On day four, catch a bumboat to **Pulau Ubin** for a jungle cycle. On the way back, pay your respects at the **Changi Memorial & Chapel** before chilli crab feasting at **Jumbo**. End the night at rooftop **Lantern** or party at **Clarke Quay**.

## Chinatown & the CBD





the large bronze Buddha Maitreya nearby for good luck.

Next door is the even more polychromatic **Sri Krishnan Temple**. It too attracts worshippers from the Kuan Yin temple, who show a great deal of religious pragmatism by also burning joss sticks and offering prayers at what is actually a Hindu temple.

### St Andrew's Cathedral

CHURCH

(Map p478; [www.livingstreams.org.sg](http://www.livingstreams.org.sg); 11 St Andrew's Rd; ☎9am-5pm Mon-Sat; 🚏City Hall) Singapore's sugar-white, wedding-cake cathedral stands in stark contrast against the buzzing cityscape. Completed in 1838 but torn down and rebuilt in its present form in 1862 after lightning damaged the original building (twice!), the cathedral has a 63.1m-tall tower, huge naves and lovely stained glass above the west doors. The grounds make a nice place for a picnic or siesta on the grass.

### CHINATOWN & THE CBD

More about the vibe than must-see sites, historic Chinatown is a restless cacophony of scented temples, wet markets and hawk-er centres, antique shops, and retro malls peddling cheap reflexivity. Restored shop-houses belie the area's rough 'n' ready past, evocatively documented at the Chinatown Heritage Centre. Trendy night owls sip and sup on Ann Siang Hill, or south of Maxwell Rd in the equally gentrified Duxton Hill area.

Wedge between Chinatown and the Singapore River, the Central Business District (CBD) serves up some fantastic sculptures, especially around Raffles Place and the river. The area also harbours a few surviving colonial relics, the finest of which is the mighty Fullerton Hotel, housed in the former general post office.



### Baba House

MUSEUM

(Map p482; ☎6227 5731; [www.nus.edu.sg/cfa/museum/](http://www.nus.edu.sg/cfa/museum/); 157 Neil Rd; admission free; ☎1hr tours 2pm Mon, 6.30pm Tue, 10am Thu, 11am Sat; 🚏Outram Park) You need to book ahead to visit Baba House, but the guided tour of this faithfully restored Peranakan heritage home is well worth the effort. Furnished as it was in the 1920s, its knowledgeable tour guides weave tales of affluent Peranakan life with every detail, including the secret peepholes through which shy Nonya ladies could spy on guests in the central hall.

Built in the 1890s, the property once housed shipping tycoon Wee Bin.

## Chinatown & the CBD

### 📍 Top Sights

- Baba House ..... A4

### 📍 Sights

- 1 Buddha Tooth Relic Temple ..... D2  
 2 Chinatown Heritage Centre ..... D1  
 3 Singapore City Gallery ..... D3  
 4 Sri Mariamman Temple ..... D2  
 5 Thian Hock Keng Temple ..... E2

### 📍 Activities, Courses & Tours

- 6 Kenko Wellness Spa ..... E1  
 Mr Lim Foot Reflexology ..... (see 7)  
 7 People's Park Complex ..... C1

### 📍 Sleeping

- 8 Club ..... D3  
 9 Fernloft ..... D2  
 10 Hotel 1929 ..... C2  
 11 Klapsons ..... C6  
 12 New Majestic Hotel ..... B3  
 13 Pillows & Toast ..... D1  
 14 Scarlet ..... D3  
 15 Wink Hostel ..... D1

### 📍 Eating

- 16 Blue Ginger ..... D4  
 17 Chinatown Complex ..... C2  
 18 Ci Yan Organic Vegetarian  
 Health Food ..... D2

- 19 Cumi Bali ..... C4  
 20 Da Dong Restaurant ..... D2  
 21 Esquina ..... C3  
 22 Latteria Mozzarella Bar ..... C3  
 23 Maxwell Rd Hawker Centre ..... D3  
 Tong Heng ..... (see 36)  
 24 Ya Kun Kaya Toast ..... E1

### 📍 Drinking

- 25 1 Altitude ..... G1  
 26 Backstage Bar ..... D2  
 27 Beaujolais Wine Bar ..... D2  
 La Terrazza ..... (see 33)  
 28 Plain ..... C4  
 29 Tantric Bar ..... C3  
 30 Tea Chapter ..... C3  
 31 Yixing Xuan Teahouse ..... D3

### 📍 Entertainment

- 32 Chinese Theatre Circle ..... D2  
 33 Screening Room ..... D2  
 34 Singapore Chinese Orchestra ..... E4  
 35 Taboo ..... C3

### 📍 Shopping

- 36 Eu Yan Sang ..... D2  
 37 Far East Legend ..... D2  
 38 Utterly Art ..... D1  
 39 Yue Hwa Chinese Products ..... C1

## Chinatown Heritage Centre

MUSEUM

(Map p482; [www.chinatownheritagecentre.sg](http://www.chinatownheritagecentre.sg); 48 Pagoda St; adult/child \$10/6; ☎9am-8pm, last entry 7pm; 📍Chinatown) Spread across three adjoining shophouses, the Chinatown Heritage Centre lifts the lid on Chinatown's chaotic, colourful and often scandalous past. While its production values can't match those of the city's blockbuster museums, its endearing jumble of old photographs, personal anecdotes and recreated interiors deliver a moving journey through the neighbourhood's highs and lows.



## Buddha Tooth Relic Temple

BUDDHIST TEMPLE

(Map p482; [www.btrts.org.sg](http://www.btrts.org.sg); 288 South Bridge Rd; ☎7am-7pm, relic viewing 9am-6pm; 📍Chinatown) Consecrated in 2008, this huge, five-storey Buddhist temple houses what is reputedly the left canine tooth of the Buddha, recovered from his funeral pyre in Kushinagar, northern India. While its authenticity is

contested, the relic enjoys VIP status inside a 420kg solid-gold stupa (BYO binoculars) in a dazzlingly ornate 4th-floor room.

More religious relics await at the 3rd-floor museum, while the peaceful rooftop garden features a huge prayer wheel inside a 10,000 Buddha Pavilion.

## Sri Mariamman Temple

HINDU TEMPLE

(Map p482; 244 South Bridge Rd; ☎7am-noon, 6-9pm; 📍Chinatown) Originally built in 1823, then rebuilt in 1843, Singapore's oldest Hindu temple is most famous for its explosively colourful *gopuram* (entrance tower), built in the 1930s and featuring deliciously kitsch statues of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver and Shiva the destroyer. Every October, the temple hosts the Thimithi Festival, during which devotees hot foot it over burning coals. Ouch.

## Thian Hock Keng Temple

HINDU TEMPLE

(Map p482; 158 Telok Ayer St; ☎7.30am-5.30pm; 📍Chinatown, Tanjong Pagar, Raffles Place) While



Chinatown's most famous Hindu temple is swamped, its oldest and most important Hokkien temple is often a haven of tranquillity. Built between 1839 and 1842, it was once the favourite landing point of Chinese sailors, before land reclamation pushed the sea far down the road. Curiously, the gates are Scottish and the tiles Dutch.

### Singapore City Gallery

GALLERY

(Map p482; [www.ura.gov.sg/gallery](http://www.ura.gov.sg/gallery); URA Bldg, 45 Maxwell Rd; ☎9am-5pm Mon-Sat; 🚶Tanjong Pagar) This city-planning exhibition gallery provides a compelling insight into the government's resolute policies of high-rise housing and land reclamation. The highlight is an 11m-by-11m scale model of the city, which shows how Singapore should look once the projects currently under development are finished.

### LITTLE INDIA

Riotous Little India slaps you across the face with its teeming five-foot ways, blaring Bollywood tunes and crayon-hued shophouses. Originally a European enclave, the district bloomed into an Indian hub after a Jewish-Indian businessman started farming buffalo here. Today, the area is packed with men on two-year contracts from India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka doing the dirty construction jobs that Singaporeans won't stoop to. For the full 'Mumbai' effect, head in on a crowded Sunday afternoon.

### Sri Veeramakaliamman Temple

HINDU TEMPLE

(Map p486; 141 Serangoon Rd; ☎5.15am-12.15pm & 4pm-9.15pm; 🚶Little India) Little India's most colourful, bustling temple is dedicated to

the goddess Kali, usually depicted wearing a necklace of skulls and disembowelling unfortunate humans. The bloodthirsty consort of Shiva has always been popular in Bengal, the birthplace of the labourers who built the structure in 1881. The temple is at its most evocative during each of the four daily *puja* (prayer) sessions.

### Abdul Gafoor Mosque

MOSQUE

(Map p486; 41 Dunlop St; 🚶Little India) Completed in 1910, the Abdul Gafoor mosque serves up a storybook fusion of Moorish, southern Indian and Victorian architectural styles. Look out for the elaborate sundial crowning its main entrance, each of its 25 rays decorated with Arabic calligraphy denoting the names of 25 prophets. The sundial is the only one of its kind in the world. Only worshippers can enter the prayer hall.

### Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple

HINDU TEMPLE

(Map p486; 397 Serangoon Rd; ☎5.45am-noon & 5-9pm; 🚶Farrer Park) Dedicated to Vishnu, this temple dates from 1855 but the striking, 20m-tall *gopuram* is a S\$300,000 1966 addition. Inside is a statue of Vishnu, his sidekicks Lakshmi and Andal, and his bird-mount Garuda. If you're here in February for the Thaipusam Festival, the procession of devotees, with spikes and skewers driven through their bodies, begins under the temple's *gopuram*.

### Sakya Muni Buddha Gaya Temple

BUDDHIST TEMPLE

(Temple of 1000 Lights; Map p486; 366 Race Course Rd; ☎8am-4.45pm; 🚶Farrer Park) This 1927 temple's 15m-tall, 300-tonne Buddha has some

## STREET SCULPTURE

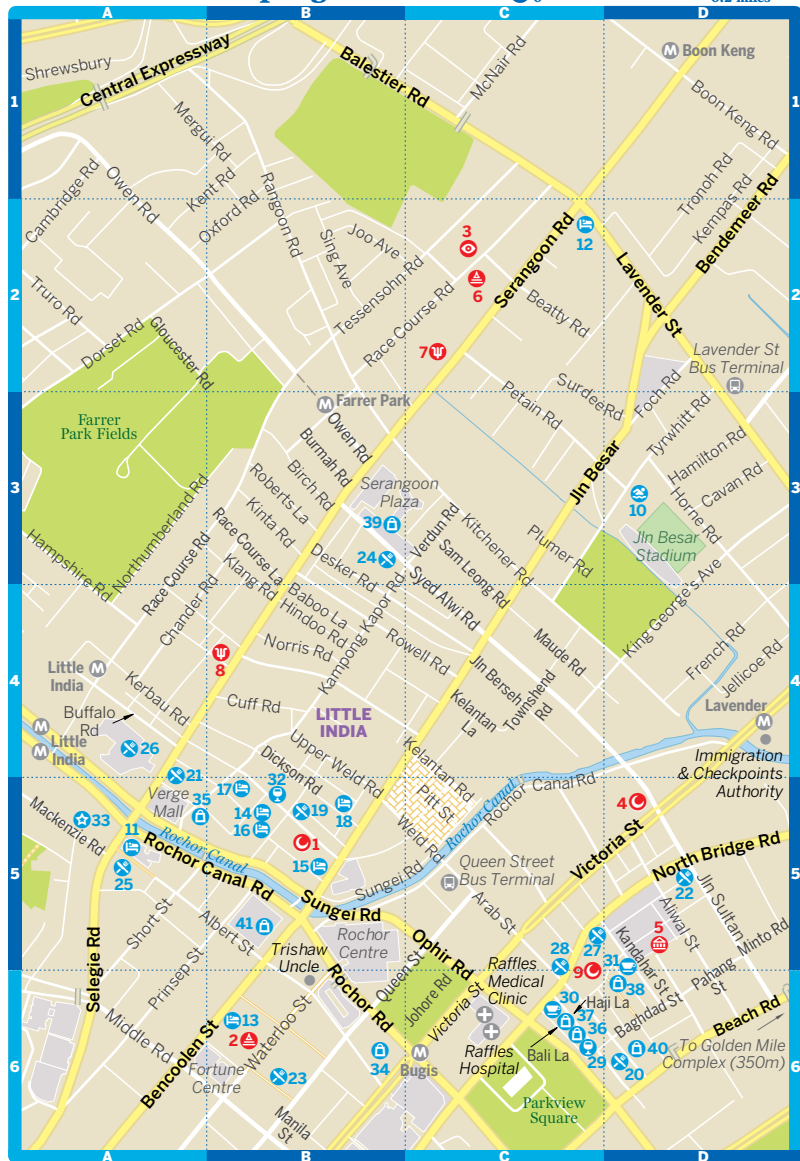
Singapore is spiked with a healthy collection of public sculpture by acclaimed local and international artists. Check out these babies:

- » **Abundance** (Map p478; Millenia Walk, 9 Raffles Blvd; 🚶Esplanade) Sun Yu Li
- » **Between Sea & Sky** (Map p478; Marina Mandarin Hotel, 6 Raffles Blvd; 🚶Esplanade) Olivier Strehelle
- » **Bird** (Map p478; UOB Plaza) Fernando Botero
- » **First Generation** (Map p478; Cavenagh Bridge; 🚶Raffles Place) Chong Fat Cheong
- » **Homage to Newton** (Map p478; UOB Plaza) Salvador Dalí
- » **Love** (Map p490; Penang Rd; 🚶Dhoby Ghaut) Robert Indiana
- » **Millennium** (Map p478; Empress Pl; 🚶Raffles Place) Victor Tan
- » **Reclining Figures** (Map p478; OCBC Bldg, Chulia St) Henry Moore
- » **Seed** (Map p478; Esplanade waterfront garden) Han Sai Por
- » **Six Brushstrokes** (Map p478; Millenia Walk, 9 Raffles Blvd) Roy Lichtenstein

# Little India & Kampong Glam

0 0.2 miles 400 m

SINGAPORE SIGHTS



very heterogeneous housemates, including Kuan Yin (Guanyin), the Chinese goddess of mercy, and the Hindu deities Brahma and Ganesh. While the yellow tigers at the entrance symbolise protection and vitality, the temple's huge mother-of-pearl Buddha

footprint is reputedly a replica of the one on top of Adam's Peak in Sri Lanka.

## Leong San See Temple

CHINESE TEMPLE

(Map p486; 371 Race Course Rd; ☉6am-6pm; 🚶Farrer Park) This Taoist temple's name translates

## Little India & Kampong Glam

### 📍 Sights

- 1 Abdul Gafoor Mosque ..... B5
- 2 Kuan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple ..... B6
- 3 Leong San See Temple ..... C2
- 4 Malabar Muslim Jama-Ath Mosque ..... D5
- 5 Malay Heritage Centre ..... D5
- 6 Sakya Muni Buddha Gaya Temple ..... C2
- 7 Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple ..... C2
- 8 Sri Veeramakaliamman Temple ..... B4
- 9 Sultan Mosque ..... C6

### 🏊 Activities, Courses & Tours

- 10 Jalan Besar Swimming Complex ..... D3

### 🏠 Sleeping

- 11 Albert Court Village Hotel ..... A5
- 12 Hive ..... C2
- 13 Ibis Singapore on Bencoolen ..... B6
- 14 InnCrowd ..... B5
- 15 Mayo Inn ..... B5
- 16 Perak Hotel ..... B5
- 17 Prince of Wales ..... B5
- 18 Wanderlust ..... B5

### 🍴 Eating

- Ah-Rahman Royal Prata ..... (see 26)
- Ananda Bhavan ..... (see 26)
- 19 Bismillah Biryani ..... B5
- 20 Café Le Caire ..... D6

- 21 Moghul Sweet Shop ..... A4
- 22 Nan Hwa Chong Fish-Head  
Steamboat Corner ..... D5
- 23 QS269 Food House ..... B6
- 24 Sankranti ..... B3
- 25 Shish Mahal ..... A5
- 26 Tekka Centre ..... A4
- 27 Warong Nasi Pariaman ..... C5
- 28 Zam Zam ..... C5

### 🍷 Drinking

- 29 BluJaz Cafe ..... C6
- 30 Going Om ..... C6
- 31 Maison Ikkoku ..... D5
- 32 Zsofi Tapas Bar ..... B5

### 🎬 Entertainment

- Prince of Wales ..... (see 17)
- 33 Rex Cinemas ..... A5

### 🛍 Shopping

- 34 Bugis Street Market ..... B6
- 35 Celebration of Arts ..... A5
- 36 Dulcetfig ..... C6
- 37 K.I.N ..... C6
- 38 Little Shophouse ..... D6
- 39 Mustafa Centre ..... B3
- 40 Sifr Aromatics ..... D6
- 41 Sim Lim Square ..... B5

as Dragon Mountain Temple. It dates from 1917 and is dedicated to Kuan Yin (Guanyin). The temple features timber beams beautifully carved with chimera, dragons, flowers and human figures, and sees more religious fervour than other, larger Taoist temples in Singapore. To get here, walk north up Serangoon Rd. The temple is opposite the intersection with Beatty Rd.

### KAMPONG GLAM

Compact Kampong Glam is as intriguing as it is incongruous. Not only is it Singapore's Muslim heartland – sprinkled with mosques, sheesha-scented cafes, perfume traders, and fabric and rug shops – it's also home to Haji Lane, a hipster hangout lined with fashion-forward boutiques. Roughly bounded by Victoria St, Jln Sultan and Beach Rd – all immediately northeast of Bugis MRT – the district's name derives from *kampung* (the Malay word for village) and *gelam*, a type of tree that once grew here.

### Sultan Mosque

MOSQUE

(Map p486; [www.sultanmosque.org.sg](http://www.sultanmosque.org.sg); 3 Muscat St; ☉9am-noon & 2-4pm Sat-Thu, 2.30-4pm Fri; 🚗Bugis) Singapore's largest mosque is the golden-domed focal point of Kampong Glam. It was originally built in 1825 with the aid of a grant from Raffles and the East India Company, as a result of Raffles' treaty with the Sultan of Singapore that allowed him to retain sovereignty over the area. A hundred years later in 1928, the original mosque was replaced by the present magnificent building.

Interestingly, the building was designed by an Irish architect who worked for the same company that designed the Raffles Hotel. Bear in mind that this is a functioning mosque and only go inside if there isn't a prayer session going on. Non-Muslims are asked to refrain from entering the prayer hall at any time.

### Malabar Muslim

#### Jama-Ath Mosque

MOSQUE

(Map p486; 471 Victoria St; 11am-9pm; 🚗Lavender) The blue-tiled Malabar Muslim Jama-Ath

## TIONG BAHRU

Those with finely tuned hipster radars will most likely end up in Singapore's Tiong Bahru neighbourhood. Yet Singapore's latest epicentre of cool is more than just idiosyncratic boutiques, bars and cafes – it's also a rare heritage gem. Distinctly low-rise, the area was Singapore's first public housing estate and its streetscapes of white-washed, 'walk-up' art deco apartments are an unexpected architectural treat.

For a taste of pre-gentrification, dive into the **Tiong Bahru Market & Food Centre** (83 Seng Poh Rd; 𠂆Tiong Bahru), old school right down to its orange exterior, the neighbourhood's original hue. The upstairs hawker centre is home to cultish **Tiong Bahru Roasted Pig** (02-38, Tiong Bahru Market & Food Centre; ☎7.30am-7.30pm) and **Jan Bo Shui Kueh** (02-05, Tiong Bahru Market & Food Centre; ☎6.30am-10.30pm), the latter famous for its amazing *chwee kueh* (steamed rice cake topped with diced preserved radish).

For new-school cool, hit Yong Siak St. It's here that you'll find coffee geek mecca **40 Hands** (www.40handscoffee.com; 78 Yong Siak St; ☎8.30am-6.30pm Tue & Sun, 8.30am-10pm Wed & Thu, 8.30am-11pm Fri & Sat; 𠂆Tiong Bahru), fantastic independent bookshop **BooksActually** (www.booksactually.com; 9 Yong Siak St; ☎11am-6pm Mon, 11am-9pm Tue-Fri, 10am-9pm Sat, 10am-6pm Sun; 𠂆Tiong Bahru), and worldly design store **Strangelets** (www.strangelets.sg; 7 Yong Siak St; 𠂆Tiong Bahru). Around the corner from Strangelets, **Nana & Bird** (www.nanaandbird.com; 01-02, 79 Chay Yan St; ☎noon-7pm Wed-Fri, 11am-7pm Sat & Sun; 𠂆Tiong Bahru) stocks forward fashion, accessories and art, including local labels Aijek and By Invite Only.

A few blocks away, **Fleas & Trees** (01-10, 68 Seng Poh Lane; ☎01-10: ☎6-10pm Tue-Fri, 10am-10pm Sat & Sun; 𠂆Tiong Bahru) offers hand-picked men's and women's vintage threads, decorative objects, eclectic plants and backcopies of *Wallpaper*, *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue*. To reach Tiong Bahru, catch the MRT to Tiong Bahru station, walk east along Tiong Bahru Rd for 350m, then turn right onto Kim Pong Rd.

Mosque, the only one on the island dedicated to Malabar Muslims from the South Indian state of Kerala, is one of the most distinctive in Singapore, but it didn't always look this way. Work on the building started in 1956, but it wasn't officially opened until 1963 due to cash-flow problems. The magnificent tiling on the mosque was only finished in 1995.

If you are appropriately attired and do not come in during prayer sessions, you can now visit the mosque. Simply approach the imam (available at the ground floor resource room).

### Malay Heritage Centre

MUSEUM

(Map p486; www.malayheritage.org.sg; 85 Sultan Gate; adult/under 6yr \$S\$4/free; ☎10am-6pm Tue-Sun; 𠂆; 𠂆Bugis) The Kampong Glam area is the historic seat of the Malay royalty, resident here before the arrival of Raffles, and the *istana* (palace) on this site was built for the last sultan of Singapore, Ali Iskandar Shah, between 1836 and 1843. It's now a museum, offering an interesting account of Singapore's Malay people.

## ORCHARD ROAD & SURROUNDS

What was once a dusty road lined with spice plantations and orchards is now a 2.2km torrent of blockbuster malls, department stores, and speciality shops; enough to burn out the toughest shopaholics. But wait, there's more, including drool-inducing food courts, a heritage-listed side street rocking with bars, and a somewhat off-the-radar film museum.



### Singapore Botanic Gardens

GARDENS

(Map p490; ☎6471 7361; www.sbg.org.sg; 1 Cluny Rd; Garden admission free, National Orchid Garden adult/senior/child \$S\$5/1/free; ☎5am-midnight, National Orchid Garden 8.30am-7pm, last entry 6pm; 𠂆7, 105, 123, 𠂆Botanic Gardens) Located 2km west of Orchard Rd, Singapore's 52-hectare Botanic Gardens are an urban Xanax, complete with lakes, rare rainforest, symphony stage and themed gardens (including the National Orchid Garden). A late-afternoon stroll along its myriad paths, followed by a drink or dinner at **Halia** (☎6476 6711; www.halia.com.sg; Singapore Botanic Gardens; mains \$S\$30-60; ☎noon-3pm & 6-10pm) or Au

Jardin Les Amis (p523) is one of the city's most memorable experiences.

The **National Orchid Garden** is home to over 1000 species and 2000 hybrids of orchids, around 600 of which are on display – the largest showcase of tropical orchids on earth. Look out for the *Vanda Miss Joaquim*, Singapore's national flower, which Agnes Joaquim discovered in her garden in 1893. Free classical music concerts are held regularly in the Botanic Gardens. Check the website for upcoming events.

### **Emerald Hill Road**

HISTORIC NEIGHBOURHOOD

(Map p490; Somerset) Take refuge from retail on Emerald Hill Road, a heritage-lauded street lined with some of Singapore's finest terrace houses. Special mentions go out to No 56 (built in 1902, and one of the earliest buildings here), Nos 39 to 45 (with unusually wide frontages and a grand Chinese-style entrance gate) and Nos 120 to 130 (with art deco features dating from around 1925).

At the Orchard Rd end of the hill is a cluster of buzzing bars housed in beautiful shophouse renovations, among them handsome Latino Que Pasa (p529).

### **Cathay Gallery**

MUSEUM

(Map p490; [www.thecathaygallery.com.sg](http://www.thecathaygallery.com.sg); 2nd fl, 2-16 The Cathay, 2 Handy Rd; ☎11am-7pm Mon-Sat; Dhoby Ghaut) A cinematic museum housed in Singapore's first high-rise building, the Cathay Gallery traces the history of the Loke family, early pioneers in film production and distribution in Singapore and founders of the Cathay Organisation. Pore over movie posters, cameras and programs that capture the golden age of local cinema.

## **EASTERN SINGAPORE**

They're oft overshadowed by Singapore's tourist-trampled central districts, but the vibrant eastern neighbourhoods offer an altogether more authentic slice of daily Singaporean life. Bipolar Geylang serves up brothel-pimped laneways, righteous temples and mosques, and cultish street-food strip Geylang Rd. Further east, Katong (also known as Joo Chiat) offers ornate Peranakan terrace houses, craft shops and (more) fabulous nosheries, while neighbouring East Coast Park is a leafy seafront strip laced with cycling paths, picnic areas, bars and good seafood restaurants. The island's far east is where you'll find Pasir Ris, the moving Changi Museum and Chapel, and sleepy Changi Village, the jumping-off point for bucolic Pulau Ubin.

## **EAST COAST PARK**

### **East Coast Park**

PARK

(Map p492) Starting at the end of Tanjong Katong Rd in Katong and ending at the National Sailing Centre in Bedok, this 11km stretch of seafront park is where Singaporeans come to swim, windsurf, kayak, picnic, bicycle, rollerblade and, of course, eat and drink. The whole park has been superbly designed so that the many leisure facilities don't crowd the green space.

On weekends only, bus 401 from Bedok Bus Interchange, outside Bedok MRT, takes you directly to East Coast Park. On weekdays, take bus 197 from Bedok and stop along Marine Pde Rd (ask the bus driver where to get off). Walk 250m south to an underpass, which will take you into East Coast Park.

## **GEYLANG**

### **Amitabha Buddhist Centre**

BUDDHIST CENTRE

(Map p492; ☎6745 8547; [www.fpmtabc.org](http://www.fpmtabc.org); 44 Lorong 25A; ☎10.30am-6pm Tue-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun; Aljunied) Take a class on dharma and meditation at the seven-floor Amitabha Buddhist Centre, whose upstairs meditation hall, swathed in red-and-gold cloth, is open to the public and filled with beautiful devotional objects. The in-house store stocks religious and spiritual items, including prayer flags and spinning wheels. Check the website for class schedules.

### **Tan Swie Hian Museum**

GALLERY

(Map p492; ☎6744 0716; [www.tomlinson-collection.com/museum1.html](http://www.tomlinson-collection.com/museum1.html); 460 Sims Ave; ☎Mon-Fri, by appt only; Aljunied) The under-the-radar Tan Swie Hian Museum is dedicated to the work of prolific Singaporean artist Tan Swie Hian, whose works span vibrant paintings and contemporary sculpture, to Chinese calligraphy and poetry. Tan was the first person to translate the works of Samuel Beckett and Marin Sorescu into Chinese.

## **KATONG**

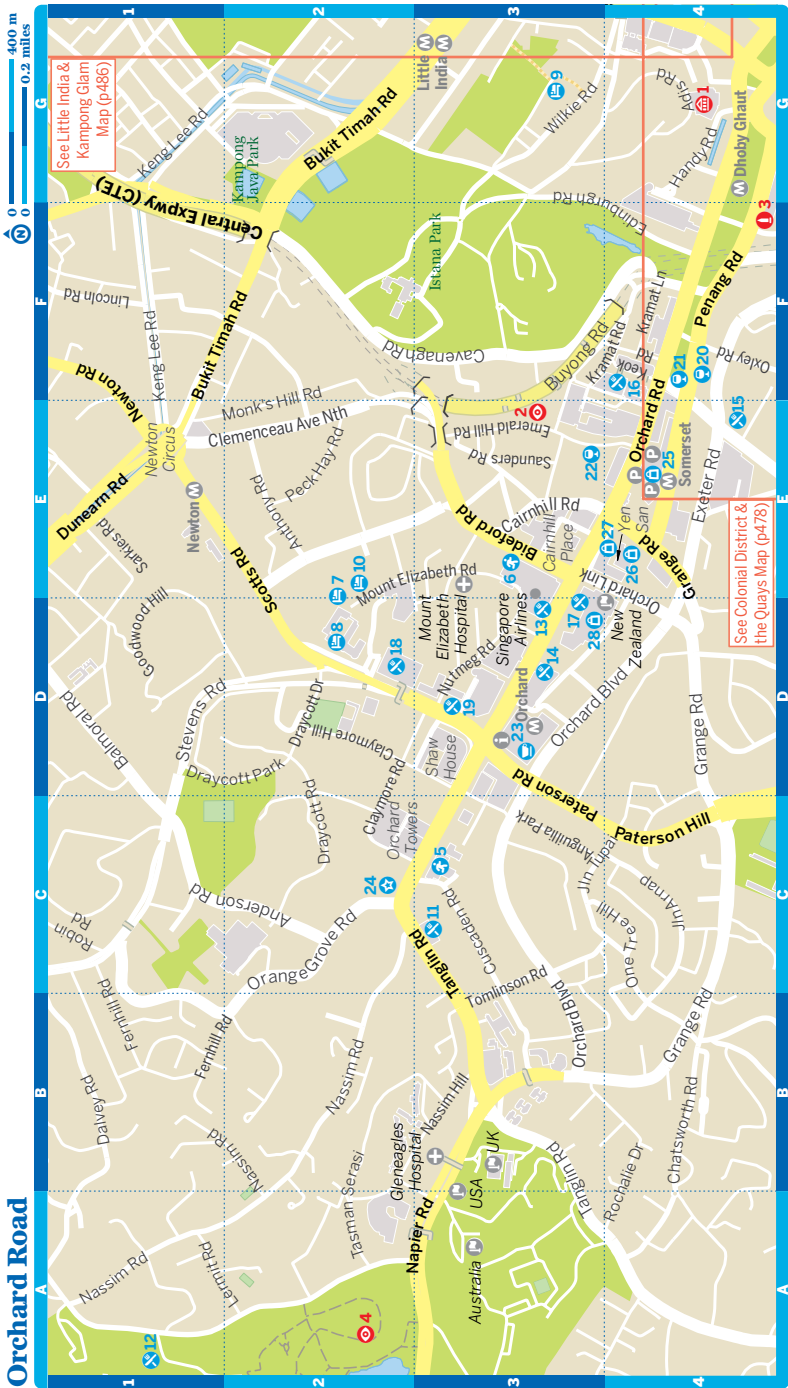
### **Peranakan Terrace Houses**

NOTABLE BUILDINGS

(Map p492; Koon Seng Rd & Joo Chiat Pl; ☎16, Eunos) These two streets just off Joo Chiat Rd are where you'll find some of the finest Peranakan terrace houses in Singapore. They're a fantastical sight, lavished with stucco dragons, birds, crabs and brilliantly glazed tiles imported from Europe. *Pintu pagar* (swinging doors) at the front of the houses are another typical feature, allowing in breezes while retaining privacy.



# Orchard Road



## Orchard Road

### Sights

- 1 Cathay Gallery ..... G4
- 2 Emerald Hill Road ..... E3
- 3 Love ..... F4
- 4 Singapore Botanic Gardens ..... A2

### Activities, Courses & Tours

- 5 Como Shambhala Urban Escape ..... C3
- 6 Fitness First ..... E3

### Sleeping

- 7 Elizabeth Hotel ..... E2
- 8 Goodwood Park Hotel ..... D2
- 9 hangout@mt.emily ..... G3
- 10 Quincy ..... E2

### Eating

- 11 Bombay Woodlands ..... C3
- 12 Casa Verde ..... A1
- 13 Din Tai Fung ..... D3
- 14 Food Republic ..... D3
- 15 Iggy's ..... (see 5)
- 15 Killiney Kopitiam ..... E4
- 16 Nagomi ..... F4

- 17 Takashimaya Food Village ..... D3
- 18 Wasabi Tei ..... D2
- 19 Wild Honey ..... D3

### Drinking

- 20 Dubliners ..... F4
- 21 KPO ..... F4
- 22 Que Pasa ..... E3
- 23 TWG Tea ..... D3

### Entertainment

- 24 Tab ..... C2


### Shopping

- 25 313 Somerset ..... E4
- Antiques of the Orient ..... (see 11)
- 26 Cathay Cineleisure Orchard ..... E4
- ION Orchard Mall ..... (see 23)
- Kinokuniya ..... (see 28)
- 27 Mandarin Gallery ..... E4
- 28 Ngee Ann City ..... D3
- Paragon ..... (see 6)
- Select Books ..... (see 11)
- Tanglin Shopping Centre ..... (see 11)

The terrace houses on Joo Chiat Place are on the north side of the street, between Everett and Mangis Rds.

### Geylang Serai Market

MARKET

(Map p492; 1 Geylang Serai;  Paya Lebar) A hub for Singapore's Malay community, Geylang Serai Market packs a lively wet market, a hawker food centre, and stalls selling everything from spices and fabrics, to skull caps and Malay CDs. If you're feeling peckish, hunt down some *goreng pisang* (banana fritters) and wash them down with a glass of *bandung* (milk with rose cordial syrup).

### Sri Senpaga Vinayagar Temple

HINDU TEMPLE

(Map p492; 19 Ceylon Rd; ☉ 7am-noon & 6-9pm; ☑ 10, 12, 14, 32) One of Singapore's most beautiful Hindu temples, Sri Senpaga Vinayagar Temple stuns visitors with its interior of colourful devotional art. One of its star features is the *kamalapaatham*, a specially sculptured granite foot-stone found in certain ancient Hindu temples. The roof of the inner sanctum is covered in gold.

### Katong Antique House

MUSEUM

(Map p492; ☎ 6345 8544; 208 East Coast Rd) This tiny shop-cum-museum is the domain of Peter Wee, a noted expert on Peranakan culture. Peter will happily regale you with tales as

you browse his collection of books, antiques and cultural artefacts. By appointment only, though it's sometimes open to the public.

### CHANGI & PASIR RIS

#### Changi Museum & Chapel

MUSEUM

(☎ 6214 2451; www.changimuseum.com; 1000 Upper Changi Rd Nth; admission free, guided tour adult/child \$8/4; ☉ 9.30am-5pm, last entry 4.30pm) Although no longer at the original Changi prison location, this memorial site remains a moving tribute to the Allied POWs captured and subject to horrific treatment by the invading Japanese forces during WWII. Stories are told through photographs, letters, and drawings, with tales of heroism and peace tempering the mood. Its centrepiece chapel is a replica of the original Changi Chapel built by inmates.

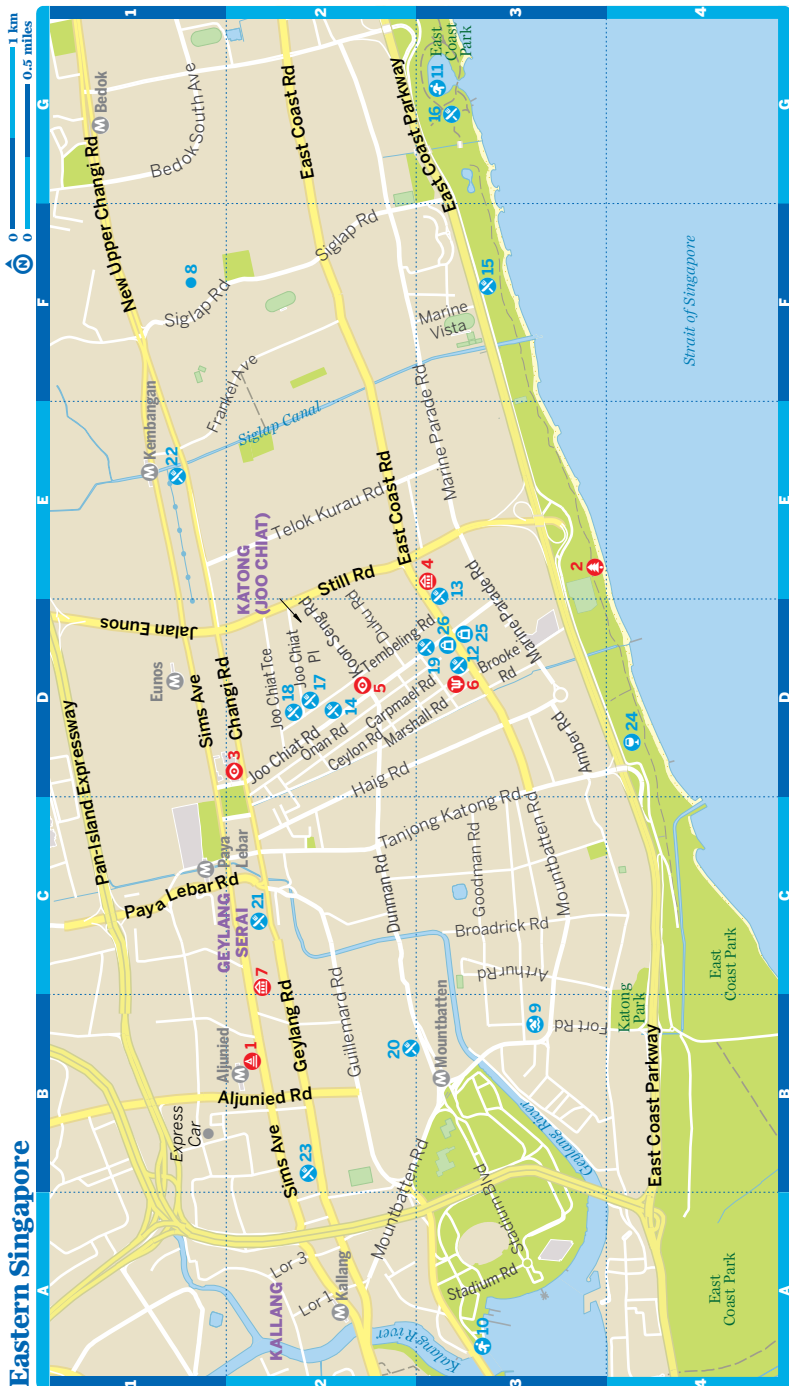
Another highlight are the full-sized replicas of the famous Changi Murals painted by POW Stanley Warren in the old POW hospital. The originals are off limits in what is now Block 151 of the nearby Changi Army Camp. Bus 2, from Victoria St or Tanah Merah MRT, passes by the entrance.

### Changi Village

NEIGHBOURHOOD

Clinging to Singapore's far northeast coast, Changi Village delivers a chilled-out, village vibe far removed from Singapore's high-rise

## Eastern Singapore



## Eastern Singapore

### 📍 Sights

- 1 Amitabha Buddhist Centre..... B2
- 2 East Coast Park..... E3
- 3 Geylang Serai Market..... D2
- 4 Katong Antique House..... E3
- 5 Peranakan Terrace Houses..... D2
- 6 Sri Senpaga Vinayagar Temple..... D3
- 7 Tan Swie Hian Museum..... C2

### 🎨 Activities, Courses & Tours

- 8 Cookery Magic..... F1
- 9 Katong Swimming Complex..... B3
- 10 Paddle Lodge..... A3
- 11 SKI360°..... G3

### 🍴 Eating

- 12 328 Katong Laksa..... D3
- 13 Chin Mee Chin Confectionery..... E3

- 14 Djanoe Koening..... D2
- 15 East Coast Lagoon Food Village..... F3
- 16 East Coast Seafood Centre..... G3
- 17 Guan Hoe Soon..... D2
- 18 Kim's Place Seafood..... D2
- 19 Maeda..... D3
- 20 Old Airport Rd Food Centre..... B2
- 21 Rochor Beancurd..... C2
- 22 Seng Kee Black Chicken Herbal Soup..... E1
- 23 Sik Wai Sin Eating House..... B2

### 🍷 Drinking

- 24 1-TwentySix..... D4

### 🛍 Shopping

- 25 112 Katong..... D3
- 26 Kim Choo Kueh Chang..... D3

norm. At its heart is a lively hawker centre, while the polluted waters of Changi Beach (where thousands of Singaporean civilians were executed during WWII) are best for looking, not touching. Opposite the hawker centre, bumboats go to Pulau Ubin.

To get here, catch bus 2 from Tanah Merah MRT or from Victoria St.

### Pasir Ris Park

PARK

(M Pasir Ris) Waterside Pasir Ris Park is packed with family-friendly activities. You can rent a bike or in-line skates, or explore the 6-hectare **mangrove boardwalk** – go during low tide to see little crabs scurrying in the mud. Little darlings will love the pony rides at **Gallop Stables** (☎6583 9665; 61 Pasir Ris Green; rides S\$10; ☀8am-noon, 2-7pm Tue-Sun). Make it over to Downtown East to grab a bite or look out for the park's hand-ful of bars.

### Downtown East

MALL, THEME PARK

(www.downtowneast.com.sg; cnr Pasir Ris Dr 3 & Pasir Ris Close; M Pasir Ris) Yes, it's the building with the indoor Ferris wheel (rides S\$6.50), not to mention a popular **cinema** and **bowling complex**, but the real highlight here is **Wild Wild Wet** (www.wildwildwet.com; adult/child/family S\$16/11/44; ☀1-7pm Mon & Wed-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat & Sun). Set to expand, this family-friendly outdoor water theme park has enough waterslide, wave pool and rafting action to keep you soaked, squealing and sunburnt.

## NORTHERN & CENTRAL SINGAPORE

Major sights aside, you'll also probably find yourself lingering in **Dempsey Hill** (Dempsey Rd), a once-crumbling army barracks now packed with trendy eateries, cafes, bars, up-market antique and furniture stores, and the odd art gallery. More buzzing eateries, bars and chi-chi locals await in the nearby expat enclave of **Holland Village**.

### TOP CHOICE Singapore Zoo

ZOO

(☎6269 3411; www.zoo.com.sg; 80 Mandai Lake Rd; adult/child S\$20/13; ☀8.30am-6pm; ☎138, M Ang Mo Kio) Even if you're not a zoo fan, Singapore Zoo should leave you purring. Set on a peninsula jutting into the Upper Seletar Reservoir, its 28 lushly landscaped hectares feel like an oasis. Cages are ditched for 'open concept' enclosures, and there is a range of engaging child-friendly shows and feeding sessions.

In fact, there are more than 2800 residents here and most of them seem pretty happy. Attractions such as the 'The Great Rift Valley of Ethiopia' enclosure convey entire ecosystems: animal, mineral, vegetable and human. Visitors can stand behind a window in 'Ethiopia' and watch 50 shameless red-bummed baboons doing things that Singaporeans get arrested for. Get around the zoo on foot or by tram (adult/child S\$5/2.50); the zoo's 15-minute reservoir boat ride offers a relaxing interlude. Save money by buying a three-in-one ticket (adult/child S\$58/38) for the zoo, the Night Safari (p494) and Jurong Bird Park (p498), and book online to avoid the queues.

## PULAU UBIN

It may be a quick 10-minute bumboat ride from Changi Village, but Pulau Ubin feels worlds apart from mainland Singapore and its jungle of tower blocks. Indeed, it's the perfect day-trip getaway, coloured with unkempt expanses of jungle and tin-roofed buildings that ooze a sleepy *kampung* (village) vibe.

**Bumboats** (one-way S\$2.50, bicycle surcharge S\$2; ☀ varies, usually 6am-9pm) to Pulau Ubin depart from Changi Point Ferry Terminal in Changi Village. There's no timetable: boats depart when 12 people are ready to go, dropping passengers off at **Pulau Ubin Village**. Food outlets aside (expect to pay between S\$20 and S\$40 for chilli crab), Pulau Ubin Village is the place to rent bikes (around S\$5-10 per day for adults and S\$2 for kids). For the sake of your booty, opt for a mountain bike. While you can't get maps of the island, there are signboards dotted around the place, though it's fun to simply trundle off on your bike and see where the road takes you.

For those keen on scraping their knees, there's **Ketam Mountain Bike Park**, with a series of trails of varying difficulty. This is also where you'll find the quirky **German Girl Shrine**, housed in a yellow hut beside an Assam tree. According to legend, the young German daughter of a coffee plantation manager was running away from British troops who had come to arrest her parents during WWI when she fell fatally into the quarry behind her house. Somewhere along the way, the Roman Catholic child became a Taoist deity, bestowing good health and fortune.

If you only have time for one part of Pulau Ubin, make it the **Chek Jawa Wetlands** (☀ 8.30am-6pm). Located on the eastern end of the island, its 1km coastal boardwalk takes you out over the sea before looping back through the mangrove swamp to the 20m-high **Jejawi Tower** and its stunning views. You can't bring your bike into the reserve so make sure the one you've rented comes with a bike lock so you can lock it securely to the bike stands at the entrance.



### Night Safari

WILDLIFE RESERVE

(www.nightsafari.com.sg; 80 Mandai Lake Rd; adult/child S\$32/21; ☀ 7.30pm-midnight, restaurants and shops from 6pm; 📍 138, 🚶 Ang Mo Kio) Night Safari offers a very different type of after-dark thrill. The park's moats and barriers seem to melt away in the darkness, giving you the feeling of travelling through a mysterious jungle filled with over 120 species of animals, including lions and leopards. While you can walk around the three trails, the best experience is on the tram tour (adult/child S\$10/5).

Consider coming early, when the animals have just been fed and are happy to come out to play, and never use the flash on your camera (it unsettles the animals).

Also, don't miss the impressive, humorous 'Creatures of the Night' show (7.30pm, 8.30pm, 9.30pm, plus 10.30pm Friday and Saturday), which will make you wonder why we ever bothered to evolve. To save money, consider buying a combined Zoo (p493) and Night Safari ticket (adult/child S\$42/28). After the Night Safari catch a return bus by 10.45pm to ensure you make the last train from Ang Mo Kio (11.30pm). Otherwise,

there's a taxi rank out the front. Expect to pay around S\$20 for a taxi ride back to central Singapore.



### Bukit Timah Nature Reserve

PARK

(☎ 1800-468 5736; www.nparks.gov.sg; 177 Hindhede Dr; ☀ 6am-7pm, visitors centre 8.30am-5pm; 📍 171, or 75 to Bukit Timah Shopping Centre) Singapore's steamy heart of darkness is Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, a 164-hectare tract of undeveloped primary rainforest clinging to Singapore's highest peak, Bukit Timah (163.63m). Five walking trails weave through the reserve, taking anywhere from 35 minutes to two-hours return, while cyclists can peddle over 6km of bike trails circumnavigating the forest – pick up a trail map from the visitors centre.

The most popular and easiest of the walking trails is the concrete-paved route straight to the summit, though you should leave time to explore the less busy side trails too. The steep paths are sweaty work, so take plenty of water, embalm yourself in mosquito repellent, and don't feed the monkeys no matter how politely they ask.



Monkeys aside, the reserve's unbroken forest canopy shelters numerous surviving species of Singapore's native wildlife, including pythons and dozens of bird species. To get here catch bus 171 from Orchard MRT or bus 75 from the CBD. Get off at the Bukit Timah Shopping Centre; the park's entrance is about 1km north along Hindhede Dr.

### MacRitchie Reservoir

PARK

(📍1800 4717300; [www.nparks.gov.sg](http://www.nparks.gov.sg); Lornie Rd; ☀️7am-7pm, Treetop Walk 9am-5pm Tue-Fri, 8.30am-5pm Sat & Sun, closed Mon; 🚶157, 🚶Toa Payoh) While not quite as wonderfully wild as Bukit Timah, MacRitchie Reservoir does boast much longer walking trails skirting the water's edge and snaking through parts of the surrounding forest. You can rent kayaks at the Paddle Lodge (p513), but most people come here for the excellent 10km walking trail – and its various well-signposted offshoots – that circumnavigates the reservoir.

The most popular place to aim for is **Treetop Walk**, the highlight of which is traversing a 250m-long suspension bridge, perched 25m up in the forest canopy. Trails then continue through the forest and around the reservoir, sometimes on dirt tracks, sometimes on wooden boardwalks. It takes three to four hours to complete the main circuit. Whichever trail you choose, you'll almost certainly encounter monkeys (long-tailed macaques) in the forest. If you're really lucky, you may even spot one of the huge monitor lizards that dart around the shallows of the reservoir with frightening speed.

### FREE Kranji War Memorial

MEMORIAL

(📍6269 6158; [www.cwgc.com](http://www.cwgc.com); 9 Woodlands Rd; ☀️7am-6pm; 🚶170, 🚶Kranji) The austere white structures and rolling manicured lawns of the Kranji War Memorial contain the WWII graves of thousands of Allied troops. Walls are inscribed with the names of 24,346 men and women who lost their lives in Southeast

Asia, while more than a few of the headstones are simply engraved with 'A Soldier of the 1939-1945 War'.

Row 262 has the name of a suspected (but never convicted) Japanese spy, Patrick Balcombe Heenan, while the bodies of Singapore's first two prime ministers are interred at the front.

The memorial is near the Causeway, off Woodlands Rd. To get here catch the MRT to Kranji, then walk 10 minutes, or take bus 170 two stops west.

### SOUTHERN & WESTERN SINGAPORE

This vast area is home to a handful of lesser-known museums and historic sites, as well as the soothing Southern Ridges walking trail.



### Southern Ridges

PARK

([www.nparks.gov.sg](http://www.nparks.gov.sg); admission free; 🚶Pasir Panjang, then 15min walk to Reflections at Bukit Chandu) Made up of a series of parks and hills connecting West Coast Park to Mt Faber, the Southern Ridges will have you trekking through the jungle without ever really leaving the city. While the whole route spans 9km, the best stretch is from Kent Ridge Park to Mt Faber. Not only is it relatively easy, it delivers lofty vistas, treetop boardwalks and the one-of-a-kind Henderson Waves walkway.

Consider starting your saunter at **Reflections at Bukit Chandu** ([www.s1942.org.sg](http://www.s1942.org.sg); 31K Pepys Rd; adult/child S\$2/1; ☀️9am-5.30pm Tue-Sun; 🚶Pasir Panjang), an absorbing WWII interpretive centre commemorating the last stand of the Malay Regiment against the Japanese in 1942. Kent Ridge Park and its short-but-satisfying canopy walk are a few steps away. When done, stroll downhill to **HortPark** (☀️7.45am-8pm), home to a small children's playground, cute herb and flower gardens, and prototype glasshouses. From HortPark, the leaf-like **Alexander Arch**

## EIGHT RIVERS, ONE ADDRESS

Due to open in the first quarter of 2013, **River Safari** ([www.riversafari.com.sg](http://www.riversafari.com.sg)) is set to become Singapore's latest blockbuster attraction. Flanking Singapore Zoo and Night Safari, the S\$160 million, 12-hectare wildlife park ambitiously recreates the ecosystems of eight iconic world rivers: the Amazon, Congo, Ganges, Mississippi, Murray, Mekong, Nile and Yangtze. Not only will it showcase 150 types of plants, it plans to house 300 animal species, among them giant pandas, critically endangered Mekong giant catfish, giant river otter, salamander, and shamelessly cute manatee. For updates on River Safari's debut, opening times and admission prices, check the River Safari website.

## BUKIT BROWN CEMETERY

In a country obsessed with all things shiny and new, **Bukit Brown Cemetery Complex** is a precious heritage jewel. Incorporating three adjoining cemeteries – Lau Sua (Old Hill), Kopi Sua (Coffee Hill) and Seh Ong Sua (Ong Clan Hill) – not only is Bukit Brown the world's largest Chinese cemetery outside of China, but the site also offers an unexpected glimpse into Singapore's eclectic history.

Originally owned by British ship-owner, trader and broker George Henry Brown, the area was bought in 1872 by Ong Kew Ho, Ong Ewe Hai and Ong Chong Chew, three wealthy Hokkien entrepreneurs set on establishing a self-sufficient village for poorer members of their clan. Mysteriously, the land came to be used solely as a burial ground before being turned into a municipal Chinese cemetery in 1922. As a municipal cemetery, it was open to Chinese people from all dialect groups, a radical departure from their relative segregation in both life and death.

With burials ceasing here in 1973, Bukit Brown is now a history buffs' dream, its thick, rambling swathes of jungle regularly revealing beautiful, long-forgotten tombs. Among these is the sprawling double tomb of entrepreneur Ong Sam Leong (1857–1918) and his wife, perched atop Seh Ong Sua. Built in 1918 and reputedly the largest tomb in Singapore, it's adorned with delicate carvings depicting scenes of filial piety, beautiful Minton floor tiles, and carved Sikh guards.

Many of the cemetery's Peranakan tombs are adorned with brightly coloured ceramic tiles (including sumptuous art nouveau majolica from England), while numerous tombs are engraved with death poems reflecting on the deceased's migration to Nanyang (Southeast Asia) from China. Those adorned with Sikh statues often belong to former police force members. These funerary guards are reputedly so rare that only one other cemetery in Shanghai lays claim to them. Within Bukit Brown itself, you'll find a great number of them in Block 4. Interestingly, tombs carved with Japanese calendar dates span back to the dark days of Singapore's Japanese occupation; the area itself was a battleground during WWII.

Ironically, Bukit Brown is once more a battleground, this time between the government, which plans to build a highway and subsequent housing here, and Bukit Brown supporters, who demand a reassessment of the government's plans and guaranteed protection of the area's heritage.

While you can download a site map on the excellent volunteer-run website [www.bukitbrown.com](http://www.bukitbrown.com), the best way to explore this threatened slice of Singaporean history is on one of the regular, free volunteer tours (upcoming dates are posted on the website). Information on Bukit Brown's history and individual tombs can also be found at [www.bukitbrown.org](http://www.bukitbrown.org), a blog written by Bukit Brown expert Raymond Goh. To reach the cemetery, catch the MRT to Botanic Gardens, then walk north up Adam Rd to the bus stop outside Singapore Bible College. From here, catch bus 74, 93, 157, 165, 852 or 855 and alight two stops later (just before Singapore Island Country Club). Cross the bridge over Adam Rd and continue walking north. Turn right into Sime Rd and left into Lorong Halwa.

bridge leads to a stunning, elevated walkway that offers eye-level views of the jungle canopy covering Telok Blangah Hill. Further along you'll hit the remarkable **Henderson Waves**, an undulating sculptural walkway suspended 36m above the forest floor. The wavelike towers that seem to rise straight out of the jungle are part of **Reflections at Keppel Bay** – a residential development designed by world-renowned architect Daniel Libeskind.

Further on await the restaurants and bars of Mt Faber (p496), Singapore's highest point and a perfect spot for a post-walk sip or nibble.

### Mt Faber Park & Cable Car

PARK

([www.mountfaber.com.sg](http://www.mountfaber.com.sg); cable car one-way adult/child S\$24/14; ☀park 8.30am–2am, cable car 8.30am–9.30pm; 🚶HarbourFront) Standing proud (if not tall) at 116m on the southern fringe of the city, Mt Faber forms the centrepiece of Mt Faber Park, and the climax to the

bracing, 4km-long walk along the Southern Ridges (p495). The most spectacular way to reach the top is on the cable car, which connects Sentosa and HarbourFront to a cluster of slick hilltop bars and restaurants. Alternatively, take bus 409 (weekends only, mid-day to 9pm) or walk. It's a short but steep climb through secondary rainforest, dotted with strategically placed benches, pavilions and lookout posts, as well as some splendid colonial-era black-and-white bungalows.

### NUS Museums

MUSEUMS

(www.nus.edu.sg/museum; 50 Kent Ridge Cres, University Cultural Centre; admission free; ☎10am-7.30pm Tue-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun; 🚶A2 (university shuttle bus), 🚶Kent Ridge) Located on the campus of the National University of Singapore (NUS), these three beautifully curated galleries hold some remarkable collections. The **Lee Kong Chian Art Museum** houses ancient Chinese ceramics, bronzes and porcelain, while the **South & Southeast Asian Gallery** focuses on mixed media regional art. Above them, the **Ng Eng Teng Gallery** showcases the paintings, drawings and sculptures by prolific Singaporean artist Ng Eng Teng (1934–2001).

Departing regularly from Kent Ridge MRT station, the free A2 university shuttle bus stops right outside the gallery building.

### Labrador Nature Reserve & Labrador Secret Tunnels

HISTORIC SITE

(www.nparks.gov.sg; Labrador Villa Rd; 🚶Labrador Park) Combining historic sites, walking trails through forest inhabited by over 70 bird species, and great views from Singapore's only sea cliffs, Labrador Park is well worth spending an afternoon at. Examine the old British guns, hike through the jungle, and visit the **Labrador Secret Tunnels**.

A series of storage and armament bunkers built by the British in the 1880s, the Secret Tunnels remained undiscovered for 50 years after WWII. Small, but fascinating, you'll find displays of artefacts left behind when the British abandoned the tunnels in 1942, as well as the buckled walls from a direct hit from a Japanese bomb. At the time of research, the tunnels were closed indefinitely for repairs.

### Haw Par Villa

MUSEUM

(262 Pasir Panjang Rd; theme park free, museum adult/child S\$4/2.50; ☎9am-7pm, museum to 5pm; 🚶Haw Par Villa) For a free freak out, head to this mythological theme park. Formerly the Tiger Balm Gardens (co-founder

### DON'T MISS

## JUNGLE BREAKFAST WITH WILDLIFE

If you like your buffets in the company of cheeky primates, don't miss Singapore Zoo's **Jungle Breakfast with Wildlife** (☎6360 8560; es.sgzadmin@wrs.com.sg; Ah Meng Restaurant (Terrace), Singapore Zoo; adult/child S\$31/20.30; ☎9-10.30am), best booked ahead. Your breakfast companions will include the zoo's obscenely adorable orang-utans. If you miss out (the orang-utans are out until 10am), you can still get that happy snap shot with them at the zoo's **Free-Ranging Orang-utan Island** (11am and 3.30pm) and **Free-Ranging Orang-utan Boardwalk** (4.30pm).

Aw Boon Haw also created the medicinal salve Tiger Balm), its psychedelic statues and dioramas capture some rather bizarre scenes from Chinese mythology. Also on-site is the **Hua Song Museum**, which offers a glimpse into the lives, enterprises and adventures of Chinese migrants around the world.

### Singapore Science Centre

MUSEUM

(www.sci-ctr.edu.sg; 15 Science Centre Rd; adult/child S\$9/5; ☎10am-6pm daily; 🚶Jurong East) Packed with enough push-pull-twist-and-turn gadgets to keep kids enthralled for hours, this absorbing museum covers subjects like the human body, ecosystems and robotics.

To reach it, alight at Jurong East MRT station, turn left along the covered walkway, cross the road and continue past a covered row of stalls before crossing Jurong Town Hall Rd.

The centre is also home to **Snow City** (www.snowcity.com.sg; 21 Jurong Town Hall Rd; adult/child per 2hr S\$27/22, combined 1hr snow access & Science Centre ticket S\$16/14; ☎9.45am-5.15pm daily), a hangar-sized deep freeze complete with a three-storey high, 70m-long slope. Each session gives you one or two hours to throw yourself at high speed down the slope on a black inner tube and throw snowballs. All visitors must be wearing long trousers (which can be rented) and socks (which can be bought). Visitors are provided with a ski jacket and warm boots. Ski and snowboarding lessons also available.

## Jurong Bird Park

BIRD PARK

(www.birdpark.com.sg; 2 Jurong Hill; adult/child S\$18/12, tram adult/child S\$5/3, combined ticket incl Singapore Zoo & Night Safari adult/child S\$58/38; ☉8.30am-6pm; 🚶194 or 251, 🚗Boon Lay) Run by the same company that operates the excellent Singapore Zoo (p493) and Night Safari (p494), the somewhat neglected Jurong Bird Park houses around 600 species of birds.

## SENTOSA ISLAND

Epitomised by its star attraction, Universal Studios, Sentosa is essentially one giant Pleasure Island. The choices are truly head-spinning, from duelling roller coasters and indoor skydiving, to stunt shows, huge racing, Ibiza-style beach bars and a casino. Many of the attractions cost extra, making it easy for a family to rack up a hefty bill in one day. The beaches, however, are completely free and a hit with locals and tourists alike.

## Universal Studios

AMUSEMENT PARK

(Map p499; www.rwsentosa.com; Resorts World; adult/child/senior S\$74/54/36; ☉10am-7pm) The top-draw attraction at Resorts World, Universal Studios' booty of rides, roller coasters, shows, shops and restaurants are neatly packaged into fantasy-world themes based on your favourite Hollywood films. One of the highlights is the pair of 'duelling roller coasters' in Sci-fi City, said to be the tallest of their kind in the world.

## Maritime Experiential Museum

MUSEUM

(Map p499; www.rwsentosa.com; Resorts World; adult/child museum S\$5/2, theatre S\$6/4; ☉10am-7pm Mon-Thu, 10am-9pm Fri-Sun, Typhoon Theatre

closes 1hr earlier) Explore the intriguing history of the maritime Silk Route at this interactive, state-of-the-art museum. While the 360-degree Typhoon Theatre is a slight let down (think 10 minutes of computer-generated wizardry, wind machines and bad acting), the Maritime Archaeology in Southeast Asia exhibition is genuinely engrossing, with fascinating information on the conservation of shipwreck artefacts. Many of these artefacts are on display, including beautiful 15th-century Thai earthenware.

## Underwater World

AQUARIUM

(Map p499; ☎6275 0030; www.underwaterworld.com.sg; behind Siloso Beach; adult/child S\$25.90/17.60; ☉10am-7pm) Seadragons and wobbling medusa jellyfish are mesmeric, while sting-rays and 10ft sharks cruise inches from your face as the travelator transports you through the Ocean Colony's submerged glass tubes. If you're brave, book a 30-minute **Dive with the Sharks** experience (S\$120 per person, bookings essential). Entry includes admission to next-door **Dolphin Lagoon**, where Indo-Pacific humpbacked dolphins perform with seals several times daily (check times online).

For S\$170 you can **swim with the dolphins**. Call or book through the Underwater World website.

## Songs of the Sea

SHOW

(Map p499; www.sentosa.com.sg; Siloso Beach; admission S\$10; ☉shows 7.40pm & 8.40pm daily, additional show 9.40pm Sat) Set around a replica Malay fishing village, this ambitious show fuses Lloyd Webber-esque theatricality

## DON'T MISS

### GILLMAN BARRACKS

Singapore's hot new cultural trump card is **Gillman Barracks** (www.gillmanbarracks.com; 9 Lock Rd; ☉11am-8pm Tue-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun; 🚶Labrador Park), a military camp-turned-contemporary art hub. The S\$10 million project includes no less than 13 international galleries, including Berlin's **Michael Janssen Gallery** (02-21, 9 Lock Rd), Tokyo's **Mizuma Gallery** (01-34, 22 Lock Rd) and Manila's **The Drawing Room** (01-06, 5 Lock Rd). Expectantly, the list of represented artists reads like a who's who of established and emerging talent, from Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan and Heman Chong, to Yayoi Kusama and Sebastião Salgado. And it's only the beginning, with another five galleries in the pipeline, as well as a dedicated Centre for Contemporary Art (CCA) featuring international artist residencies, research facilities and exhibition programmes. Peckish art fiends are covered too, with French flavours at **Masons** (01-17, 8 Lock Road; ☉noon-11pm), regionally flavoured seafood at **The Naked Finn** (01-13, 41 Malan Road; ☉dinner Mon-Sat), or a mix of international bistro grub (including pizza) and live tunes at **Timbre @ Gillman** (01-05, 9A Lock Road; ☉dinner Mon-Sat). Gillman Barracks is an easy 10-minute walk north of Labrador Park MRT station.

## Sentosa Island



SINGAPORE SIGHTS

## Sentosa Island

### Sights

- 1** Fort Siloso ..... A1
- 2** Images of Singapore ..... B2
- 3** Maritime Experiential Museum ..... B1
- 4** Palawan Beach ..... B2
- 5** Siloso Beach ..... A2
- 6** Songs of the Sea ..... B2
- 7** Tanjong Beach ..... C3
- 8** Underwater World ..... A1
- 9** Universal Studios ..... B2

### Activities, Courses & Tours

- 10** Gogreen Segway Eco Adventure ..... B2
- 11** iFly ..... B2
- 12** Sentosa Golf Club ..... C3
- 13** Spa Botanica ..... C3

### Sleeping

- 14** Capella Singapore ..... B2
- 15** Siloso Beach Resort ..... A2
- The Sentosa ..... (see 13)

### Eating

- Cliff ..... (see 13)
- 16** Coastes ..... A2
- 17** Malaysian Food Street ..... B1

### Drinking

- 18** Azzura Beach Club ..... A2
- 19** Tanjong Beach Club ..... C3
- 20** Wave House ..... A2

### Entertainment

- 21** Boiler Room ..... B1
- Movida ..... (see 21)
- St James Power Station ..... (see 21)

### Shopping

- 22** Vivocity ..... B1

with an awe-inspiring sound, light and laser extravaganza worth a hefty S\$4 million. Prepare to gasp, swoon and (occasionally) cringe.

### Fort Siloso

MUSEUM

(Mapp499; www.sentosa.com.sg; Siloso Point; adult/child S\$8/5; ☎10am-6pm; free guided tours 12.40pm & 3.40pm Fri-Sun) Designed to repel a maritime assault from the south, Siloso's



heavy guns had to be turned around when the Japanese invaded from the Malaya mainland in WWII. The British surrender soon followed, and later the fort was used by the Japanese as a prisoner-of-war camp. Documentaries, artefacts, animatronics and re-created historical scenes will absorb history buffs, while the **underground tunnels** are especially fun to explore.

### Images of Singapore

MUSEUM

(Map p499; [www.sentosa.com.sg](http://www.sentosa.com.sg); Imbiah Lookout; adult/child S\$10/7; ☉9am-7pm) Time-travel through seven centuries of Singapore history at this genuinely insightful, interactive museum. Kicking off with Singapore as a Malay sultanate, it takes you through its consolidation as a port and trading centre, WWII, and the subsequent Japanese surrender. Scenes are recreated using lifelike wax dummies, film footage and dramatic light-and-sound effects.

### Beaches

BEACHES

Sentosa's three southern beaches – **Siloso** (Map p499) to the west, **Palawan** (Map p499) in the middle and **Tanjong** (Map p499) to the east – will never match the beaches in Malaysia or Indonesia, but that doesn't seem to matter to the Singaporeans who flock here. The sandy coconut vibe is soporific, even if the muddy Straits of Singapore are a little uninviting.



## Activities

### Adventure Sport

#### G-Max Reverse Bungy &

#### GX-5 Extreme Swing

THRILL RIDE

(Map p478; [www.gmax.com.sg](http://www.gmax.com.sg); 3E River Valley Rd; per ride S\$49; ☉2pm-late; ☒Clarke Quay) Fancy being flung 60m skywards at over 200km/h?

If so, get yourself strapped inside the G-Max metal cage and prepare for a breathless view (both figuratively and literally). A few Clarke Quay beers might improve your courage, but your stomach mightn't agree. Less terrifying is the neighbouring GX5, which will have you swinging over the Singapore River at a (slightly) more merciful speed.

### iFly

THRILL RIDE

(Map p499; [www.iflysingapore.com](http://www.iflysingapore.com); Cable Car Rd; adult/child from S\$69/59; ☉10.30am-10pm Thu-Tue, noon-10pm Wed) Indoor skydiving in a vertical wind chamber; and exceptionally popular. The price includes an hour's instruction then two short skydives. They say the time you spend on one skydive here is like free-falling from 12,000ft to 3,000ft. Gulp!

### Cycling

You can hire a bike and trundle along the foreshore at East Coast Park, at Pasir Ris Park or on Pulau Ubin for between S\$5 and S\$10 per hour, depending on the quality of the bike. There are also tandem bikes.

There's a 5.7km bicycle track looping around Sentosa Island that takes in most of its attractions. Hire a bike at Siloso or Palawan Beaches.

For a more challenging workout tackle the mountain-bike trails around Bukit Timah Nature Reserve and at Pulau Ubin.

### Two Wheel Action

CYCLING

(☎6471 2775; [www.twa.com.sg](http://www.twa.com.sg)) Organises Sunday rides in collaboration with the Singapore chapter of the Hash House Harriers. You bring your own bike, meet at a prearranged point, then propel yourself into it. It costs S\$10 per session.

## SENTOSA'S ENTRANCE FEE & TRANSPORT

There is a small entrance fee to enter Sentosa Island, but it varies depending on which form of transport you choose. If you walk across from the VivoCity shopping mall, the fee is S\$1. If you catch the Sentosa Express monorail (which leaves from Level 3 of VivoCity), it's S\$3.50. If you ride the cable car, the fee is included in the cable car ticket price.

Once on the island, it's easy to get around, either by walking, taking the Sentosa Express (7am-midnight), riding the free 'beach tram' (shuttling the length of all three beaches, 9am-11pm, to midnight Friday and Saturday) or by using the free three colour-coded bus routes that link the main attractions (7am-11pm, to 12.30am Friday and Saturday).

Alternatively, if you fancy a more novel way to get around, there's **Gogreen Segway Eco Adventure** (Map p499; [www.segway-sentosa.com](http://www.segway-sentosa.com); one circuit S\$12, 30/60min guided tour S\$38/80, night tour S\$78-88; ☉10am-9.30pm). Get perpendicular on these two-wheeled vehicles and scoot around a 10-minute circuit, or opt for the longer guided trips along the beachfront. The adults-only Gogreen After Dark tour offers an atmospheric night tour of the island. The company also rents electric bikes (per hour S\$12).

**START** SINGAPORE ART MUSEUM

**FINISH** SINGAPORE RIVER

**DISTANCE** 2KM

**DURATION** TWO HOURS

## Walking Tour Colonial Singapore

In a city-state firmly fixed on tomorrow, the Colonial District offers a nostalgic glimpse of a Singapore of far-flung missionaries, Palladian architecture and high-society cricket clubs. Finish your walk with a well-deserved lunch or dinner at riverside Jumbo Seafood (p520).

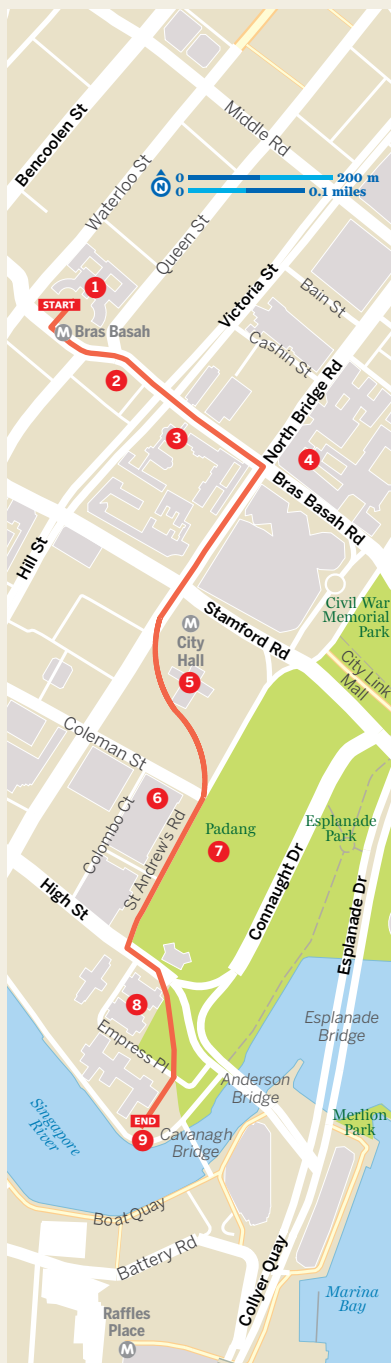
Start at the **1 Singapore Art Museum**, which occupies the former St Joseph's Institution, a Catholic boys' school. Original architectural features include the shuttered windows and ceramic floor tiles. The central dome and sweeping arcade portico were early 20th-century additions.

Heading southeast along Bras Basah Rd, you'll pass the Renaissance-inspired

**2 Cathedral of the Good Shepherd** and the English Gothic-style **3 Chijmes**, a convent-cum-restaurant complex. Diagonally opposite Chijmes is **4 Raffles Hotel**. Past guest Somerset Maugham described it as a symbol for 'all the fables of the Exotic East'; and it remains one of Singapore's most beautiful heritage sites. Relive its golden era at the Raffles Museum before heading south on North Bridge Rd to **5 St Andrew's Cathedral**, one of Singapore's few surviving examples of English Gothic-style architecture.

Across the street, **6 City Hall** is where Lord Louis Mountbatten announced Japanese surrender in 1945 and where Lee Kwan Yew declared Singapore's independence in 1965. City Hall and the neighbouring Supreme Court will reopen as the National Art Gallery of Singapore in 2015. Opposite the building is the open field of the **7 Padang**, home to the Singapore Cricket Club and Singapore Recreation Club. During WWII, the invading Japanese herded the European community together here before marching them off to Changi Prison.

Continue south along St Andrew's Rd – where the road curves to the left stand a cluster of colonial-era buildings, including the **8 Victoria Theatre & Concert Hall**. Completed in 1862, the Victoria Theatre was one of Singapore's first Victorian Revivalist buildings, inspired by the Italian Renaissance. Hang a right to hit the **9 Singapore River**, where towering skyscrapers pull you back into the future.



# The Mega-Diversity Region

**Home to thousands of natural species (with still more being discovered), Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei are a dream come true for budding David Attenboroughs. The festival of tropical flora and fauna is so abundant that this region is considered to be one of the world's 'mega-diversity' hotspots. Although vast areas of old growth forest have been cleared, a few magnificent stands remain, mostly protected within reserves and parks. You don't need to venture deep into the jungle to see wildlife, either. Botanical gardens, zoos and wildlife sanctuaries are features of each country.**

Large parts of Peninsular Malaysia (132,090 sq km) are covered by dense jungle, particularly the mountainous, thinly populated northern half, although it's dominated by palm oil and rubber plantations. On the western side of the peninsula there is a long, fertile plain running down to the sea, while on the eastern side the mountains descend more steeply and the coast is fringed with sandy beaches. Jungle features heavily in Malaysian Borneo, along with many large river systems, particularly in Sarawak. Mt Kinabalu (4095m) in Sabah is Malaysia's highest mountain.

Singapore, consisting of the main, low-lying Singapore island and 63 much smaller islands within its territorial waters, is a mere 137km north of the equator. The central area is an igneous outcrop, containing most of Singapore's remaining forest and open areas.



The western part of the island is a sedimentary area of low-lying hills and valleys, while the southeast is mostly flat and sandy. The undeveloped northern coast and the offshore islands are home to some mangrove forest.

The sultanate of Brunei covers just 5765 sq km (the Brunei government-owned cattle farm in Australia is larger than this!). The capital, Bandar Seri Begawan, overlooks the estuary of the mangrove-fringed Sungai Brunei (Brunei River), which opens onto Brunei Bay and the separate, eastern part of the country, Temburong, a sparsely populated area of largely unspoilt rainforest. Approximately 75% of Brunei retains its original forest cover.

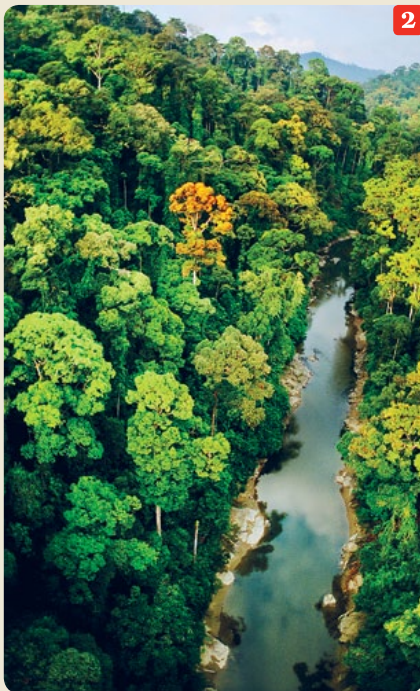
## Clockwise from top left

- 1** Deer Cave (p440), Gunung Mulu National Park, Borneo  
**2** Danum Valley (p354), Sabah, Borneo **3** Red lionfish



2

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ANDERS BLOM/IST/GETTY IMAGES ©



3

GEORGETTE DOUMMA/GETTY IMAGES ©



# Jungle Life

The region's lush natural habitats, from steamy rainforests to tidal mangroves, teem with mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and insects, many of them found nowhere else on earth. Although vast areas of old-growth forest have been cleared, a few magnificent stands remain, mostly protected within reserves and parks.

## Primates, Cats & Elephants

**Orang-utans**, Asia's only great apes, are at the top of many visitors' list. It's thought that around 11,300 live in the Bornean jungle, while they can be viewed in captivity at Sabah's Sepilok Orang-Utan Rehabilitation Centre, Sarawak's Semenggoh Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre and Singapore Zoo.

Among the many species of apes and monkey you may spot are **proboscis monkeys**. The male is an improbable-looking creature with a pendulous nose and bulbous belly; females and youngsters are more daintily built, with quaint upturned noses. Another langur (leaf monkey) is the **silvered leaf monkey**, whose fur is frosted with grey tips. **Macaques** are the stocky, aggressive monkeys that solicit snacks from tourists at temples and nature reserves. If you are carrying food, watch out for daring raids and be wary of bites – remember that rabies is a potential hazard.

Shy, tailless **gibbons** live in the trees and feed on fruits like figs. Their raucous hooting – one of the most distinctive sounds of the Malaysian jungle – helps them establish territories and find mates.

Around 2000 **pygmy elephants** live in northeastern Borneo, the largest group roams the forests around Sungai Kinabatangan. It's thought that they've lived on the island for at least 18,000 years.

Species of leopard including the **black panther** and the rare **clouded leopard** are found in Malaysia, as well as smaller species of wild cats, for example the **bay cat**, a specialised fish-eater, and the **leopard cat**, which is a bit larger than a domestic cat but with spotted fur.

### Clockwise from top left

1 Macaques 2 Elephants by Sungai Kinabatangan (p348), Sabah, Borneo 3 Malayan tiger 4 Orang-utan at Sepilok Orang-Utan Rehabilitation Centre (p343), Sabah, Borneo



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1



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## Birds & Bats

Well over 1000 species of birds flutter across the skies of this part of the world. Among the 742 species that call Malaysia home, the most easily recognisable are the various types of **hornbill** – the rhinoceros hornbill is the most flashy. Other birds on the twitchers' spotting lists include the brightly coloured **kingfishers**, **pitras** and **trogons** as well as the spectacularly named **racket-tailed drongo**.

The region has more than 100 species of **bat**, most of which are tiny, insectivorous (insect-eating) species that live in caves and under eaves and bark. **Fruit bats** (flying foxes) are only distantly related to insectivorous bats; unlike them they have well-developed eyes and do not navigate by echolocation.

### LAST CHANCE TO SEE...

**Habitat loss and hunting has placed several of the region's animals in serious danger of extinction.**

- » **Orange-utan** The WWF estimate that 12,300 live in the dwindling forests of Sabah and Sarawak, 40% less than the population 20 years ago.
- » **Malayan tiger** The exact population is unknown but considered by WWF to be around 490, the vast majority of which are found in the jungles of Pahang, Perak, Terengganu and Kelantan.
- » **Asian elephant** In 2009 a herd of 631 elephants was found living in Taman Negara; in 2012 two elephants were also spotted breakfasting in the grounds of the park's main resort. Across the wider region, however, the population is thought to be between 30,000 and 50,000.
- » **Sumatran rhinoceros** These are found mainly in isolated areas of Sabah and Endau-Rompin National Park on the peninsula. Since they need at least 10 sq km of rainforest in which to roam, their chance of survival is slim, especially given the rate at which this forest is disappearing.



STEPHEN BELCHER/OTO NATURA/AMNEN PICTURES/CORBIS ©

### Clockwise from top left

1 Great hornbill 2 Malayan flying fox 3 Sumatran rhinoceros



# Aquatic Life

Just as on land, in the region's waters – rivers, lakes and oceans – you'll also find a mind-boggling variety of corals, fish and aquatic life. The seas around islands and atolls like Sipadan, the Perhentians and Tioman offer some of the finest scuba diving in the world. Experienced divers will not want to miss the tiny islands off the northeast coast of Sabah in particular. Amid thriving coral – **sea fans** can grow to 3km – and a wealth of **sponges**, divers often encounter shimmering schools of **jacks**, **bumphead parrotfish** and **barracudas**, and may find themselves making the acquaintance of **green turtles**, **dolphins**, **manta rays** and several species of **shark**.

Of the world's seven types of turtle, four are native to Malaysia. The **hawksbill** and the **green turtle** both have nesting areas within Sabah's Turtle Islands National Park. Both these species, along with the **olive ridley** and **giant leatherback**, also swim in the waters off Peninsular Malaysia's east coast. There are established turtle rookeries on several beaches, where you may chance upon mother turtles dragging themselves above the high-tide line to bury their eggs.

## TOP DIVE SITES

- » **Sipadan** Legendary for its deep wall dives, Sipadan is a favoured hang-out of turtles, sharks and open-ocean fish.
- » **Layang Layang** A deep-ocean island famed for its pristine coral and 2000m drop-off.
- » **Pulau Perhentian** Coral reefs surround both islands – you can even wade out to some of them.
- » **Pulau Redang** Corals, green and hawksbill turtles and a rainbow of tropical fish.
- » **Pulau Tioman** One of the few places where you stand a good chance of seeing pods of dolphins.

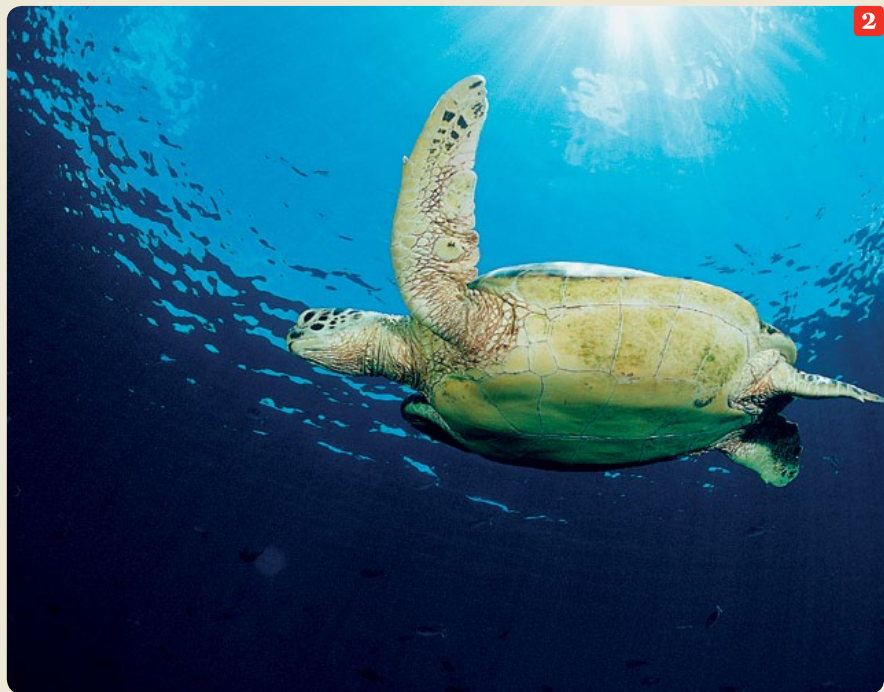
### Clockwise from top left

**1** Coral reef, Sipadan (p359), Sabah **2** Sea turtle, Sipadan (p359), Sabah **3** Diving in Sabah (p304)





FOTOMAX/GETTY IMAGES ©



2

REINHARD DÜSCHERL/GETTY IMAGES ©



# Natural Wonders

**Rafflesia** A parasite without roots, stems or leaves, this botanical wonder astonishes not only for its world-record size (up to 1m in diameter), but also for its mysterious lifestyle. They bloom for just three to five days before turning into a ring of black slime. Taman Negara and the parks of East Malaysia are the places to view these extraordinary specimens.

**Deer Cave** The world's largest cave passage open to the public, in Gunung Mulu National Park, is over 2km in length and 174m in height. It's home to anything between two and three million bats belonging to more than 12 species, who cling to the roof in a seething black mass as they gear up for the evening prowl.

**Mt Kinabalu** Formed some nine million years ago, Malaysia's highest mountain is botanical paradise. Over half the species growing above 900m are unique to the area and include oaks, laurels, chestnuts and a dense rhododendron forest. Elsewhere in the park are many varieties of orchids and insect-eating pitcher plants.

**Mangroves** These remarkable coastal trees have developed extraordinary ways to deal with an ever-changing mix of salt and fresh water. Uncounted marine organisms and nearly every commercially important seafood species find sanctuary and nursery sites among the mangrove's muddy roots. They also fix loose coastal soil, protecting against erosion and tsunamis. You'll see them on Pulau Langkawi, Bako National Park, Kuching Wetland National Park and Brunei's Temburong District.

**Kerangas** These heath forests, whose name in Iban means 'land that cannot grow rice', are composed of small, densely packed trees. They also support the world's greatest variety of pitcher plants (nepenthes), which trap insects in chambers full of enzyme-rich fluid and then digest them. There are patches in Sarawak's Bako National Park and Sabah's Maliau Basin Conservation Area.

## Clockwise from top left

**1** Rafflesia, Sarawak (p379) **2** Deer Cave (p440), Gunung Mulu National Park, Sarawak **3** Mt Kinabalu (p322), Sabah







(Continued from page 500)

**Golf****Sentosa Golf Club**

GOLF

(Map p499; ☎6275 0022; www.sentosagolf.com; 27 Bukit Manis Rd; green fees per round S\$280-450, club rental per set S\$80, buggy fee per person S\$25, shoe rental S\$10) Luxury golf club with two of the best championship courses in Asia.

**Jurong Country Club**

GOLF

(☎6560 5655; www.jcc.org.sg; 9 Science Centre Rd; green fees per round 9/18 holes S\$95-160/140-260, buggy fee 9/18 holes S\$12/20; ☉7am-7:30pm Mon-Fri, 7am-7pm Sat & Sun, night golf Tue, Thu & Fri; 📍Jurong East) Recently redesigned 18 hole, par 72 course and driving range.

**Gyms****Fitness First**

GYM

(Map p490; ☎6737 7889; www.fitnessfirst.com.sg; 08-13 Paragon, 290 Orchard Rd; ☉6.30am-10.30pm Mon-Sat, 8am-10pm Sun; 📍Orchard, Somerset) One of several Fitness First branches across Singapore, with state-of-the-art equipment and group fitness classes.

**True Fitness**

GYM

(Map p478; ☎6820 9000; www.truefitness.com.sg; 07-0011 Suntec City Mall, 3 Temasek Blvd; ☉6am-11pm Mon-Thu, to 10pm Fri, to 9pm Sat, 8am-8pm Sun; 📍Esplanade) Another popular, multi-branch gym with extensive equipment and group classes.

**Spas & Massage**

Massage, beauty treatments and reflexology are regulation Singaporean indulgences. Every mall seems to have a spa or massage joint of some sort, so you're never too far from an overhaul.

**Willow Stream**

SPA

(Map p478; ☎6339 7777; www.willowstream.com/singapore; Level 6, Fairmont Hotel, 80 Bras Basah Rd; massage treatments from S\$149; 📍City Hall) Plunge pools, jacuzzis, and aromatic steam rooms await at this luxe oasis. Top-of-the-range treatments include herbal, algae and thermal mineral baths, body wraps, and 11 types of massage (including 'travel recovery' and 'shoppers relief' options).

**People's Park Complex**

MESSAGE

(Map p482; 101 Upper Cross St; reflexology from S\$15; 📍Chinatown) This no-frills Chinatown mall is packed with cheap massage places ready to vie for your body parts (opt for the busier ones). Our favourite is **Mr Lim Foot Reflexology** (Map p482; 03-53 & 03-78).

Feeling adventurous? Try out one of the fish-pond foot spas on Level 3, where schools of fish nibble the dead skin right off your feet.

**Kenko Wellness Spa**

SPA

(Map p482; www.kenko.com.sg; 199 South Bridge Rd; reflexology per 30min S\$36, body massage per 60min S\$91; ☉10am-10pm; 📍Chinatown) Kenko is the McDonalds of Singapore spas, with branches throughout the city, but there's nothing drive-through about its foot reflexology, romantic couples' sessions (S\$328 per 2.5 hour session) or Chinese and Swedish massage (if you're after something forceful, go Chinese).

**Spa Botanica**

SPA

(Map p499; ☎6371 1318; www.spabotanica.sg; The Sentosa, 2 Bukit Manis Rd; treatments from S\$80; ☉10am-10pm) For the ultimate Sentosa treat, book a treatment at this spa nirvana, complete with cascading waterfalls, mud pools and lush, landscaped grounds. The signature treatment is the galaxy steam bath, a 45-minute wallow in medicinal chakra mud in a specially designed steam room. A free shuttle connects the spa to VivoCity, as well as to Paragon Shopping Centre on Orchard Rd.

**Swimming**

Given the polluted waters, Singapore's beaches aren't particularly swim-friendly, although there are safe swimming areas at East Coast Park and on Sentosa and the southern islands. Alternatively, Singapore's 50m public swimming pools (per adult S\$1 to S\$1.30, child 50¢ to 70¢) are winners.

**Delta Swimming Complex**

SWIMMING

(☎6474 7573; 900 Tiong Bahru Rd; ☉8am-9.30pm Wed-Mon, 2.30-9.30pm Tue; 📍Redhill)

**Jalan Besar Swimming Complex**

SWIMMING

(Map p486; ☎6293 9058; 100 Tyrwhitt Rd; ☉8am-9.30pm Thu-Tue, 2.30-9.30pm Wed; 📍Lavender)

**Katong Swimming Complex**

SWIMMING

(Map p492; ☎6344 9609; 111 Wilkinson Rd; ☉8am-9.30pm Wed-Mon, 2.30-9.30pm Tue; 📍Mountbatten)

**Water Sports**

Aquabikes, canoes, kayaks and sailboards are available for hire on Sentosa's beaches for around S\$15 per hour.

**SKI360°**

WATER SPORTS

(Map p492; www.ski360degree.com; 1206A East Coast Parkway; first hr weekdays/weekends S\$32/

42, each subsequent hr S\$16/22; ☀10am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-10pm Sat & Sun) Forget swimming. Cool off by strapping on some waterskis, a kneeboard or a wakeboard and getting dragged around a lagoon on the end of a cable. If possible, head in on weekday mornings, when there's usually hardly anyone there. On weekdays, take bus 197, stop along Marine Pde Rd and head through an underpass. On weekends, take bus 401 from Bedok MRT.

### Paddle Lodge

BOATING

(Map p492; ☎6344 6337; www.scf.org.sg; per 2hr S\$15-20; ☀9am-6pm Tue-Sun; 🏟Stadium) The Singapore Canoe Federation rents out kayaks from this place located at MacRitchie Reservoir.

### Yoga

#### Como Shambhala Urban Escape

YOGA

(Map p490; ☎6304 3552; www.singapore.com/shambhala.bz; 06-05 Forum, 583 Orchard Rd; 90min class S\$37; ☀9am-8.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.45am-5pm Sat, 9am-4pm Sun; 🏟Orchard) This smart yoga and massage centre offers Hatha, Iyengar, and Ashtanga classes, Pilates, as well as oil and deep tissue massage. No booking required.

#### Absolute Yoga

YOGA

(☎6732 6007; www.absoluteyogasingapore.com; 02-01 Valley Point, 491 River Valley Rd; drop-in class S\$40.66; ☀7am-9pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-6pm Sat & Sun; 🏟970) Absolute Yoga offers 'Hot Yoga', Hatha and Vinyasa classes along with Pilates.



### Courses

#### Cooking

You've eaten the food, now learn how to cook it yourself, Singapore-style! Cooking classes generally run from two to four hours. Many are hands-on; some are instruction only. We advise checking websites or calling first for bookings and schedules.



#### Cookery Magic

COOKING COURSE

(Map p492; ☎6348 9667; www.cookerymagic.com; 117 Fidelio St; 3hr classes from S\$100; 🏟28, 🏟Eunos) Ruqhana conducts standout Asian-cooking classes in her own home. She also conducts classes in an old *kampung* home on the island of Pulau Ubin. Optional market trips before a class are organised for an extra S\$50.

### Palate Sensations

#### Cooking School

COOKING COURSE

(☎6478 9746; www.palatesensations.com; 10 Biopolis Road, Chromos 01-03; 3hr courses from S\$100; 🏟Buona Vista) Both novices and serious foodies head here to hone their skills with top-notch chefs. Standard courses run for three hours and are wonderfully hands-on, with themes spanning anything from Malay festival foods, to classic Punjab cuisine and German Yuletide treats.

#### Shermay's Cooking School

COOKING COURSE

(☎6479 8442; www.shermay.com; Block 43, Jalan Merah Saga 01-76; classes from S\$60; 🏟Holland Village) Singaporean, Thai, Peranakan, chocolate and guest chefs are Shermay's specialties! Hands-on classes cost more.



### Tours

The Singapore Tourism Board books a range of tours and publishes a handful of free, self-guided walking-tour brochures.

#### Harbour Cruises

##### Imperial Cheng Ho

##### Dinner Cruise

BOAT TOUR

(☎6533 9811; www.watertours.com.sg; adult/child daytime cruises S\$29/16, dinner cruises S\$57/31; 🏟Marina Bay) Three daily tours from Marina South to Sentosa or Kusu Island on a hulking old replica of the *Cheng Ho* junk. The food may not be spectacular, but the views are.

#### Duck Tour

TOUR

(Map p478; ☎6338 6877; www.ducktours.com.sg; adult/child S\$33/23; 🏟Esplanade) A one-hour romp in the 'Wacky Duck', a Vietnam War amphibious curio, departing from Suntec City. Check out the city's sites from the road then hit the water for a harbour cruise. A good one for the kids.

#### River Cruises

A fabulous way to get a feel for central Singapore and its history is to take a river cruise. Bumboat cruises depart from various jetties along the Singapore River including Clarke Quay, Raffles Landing and Boat Quay, as well as Merlion Park and the Esplanade Jetty on Marina Bay, generally running between 9am and 11pm.

#### Hippo River Cruise

BOAT TOUR

(Map p478; ☎6338 6877; www.ducktours.com.sg; adult/child S\$18/13, day pass S\$23/17; 🏟Clarke Quay) This is a 30-minute open-top boat ride departing from Clarke Quay every 25

minutes. You can opt for a day pass, which allows ticket holders to hop on/off at nine stops along the Singapore River.

### Singapore River Cruise

BOAT TOUR

(Map p478; ☎6336 6111; [www.rivercruise.com.sg](http://www.rivercruise.com.sg); adult/child from S\$17/10; ☐Clarke Quay) Jump on a traditional bumboat and sail up and down the Singapore River on these 40- and 60-minute tours from the Merlion at the river mouth upstream to the city's famous quays.

### Special Interest Tours

#### Original Singapore Walks

WALKING TOUR

(☎6325 1631; [www.singaporewalks.com](http://www.singaporewalks.com); adult/child from S\$30/15) Engaging, themed walking tours through Chinatown, Little India, Kampong Glam, the Colonial District and war-related sites. Tours last from two to three and a half hours; check the website for meeting places and times.

#### Charlotte Chu Tours

WALKING TOUR

(☎8101 1003.; [charlottetchutours@gmail.com](mailto:charlottetchutours@gmail.com); 3hr tour S\$240) Protégé of veteran tour guide Geraldene Lowe-Ahmad, Charlotte Chu conducts lively, specialised walking tours. Themes include heritage and culinary Singapore, as well as off-the-beaten-track and festival-related tours. While not obligatory, tours are best booked one week ahead.

#### Geraldene Lowe-Ahmad

WALKING TOUR

([geraldenestours@hotmail.com](mailto:geraldenestours@hotmail.com); private tour from S\$100 per hr, group tours from S\$40) Although her colleague Charlotte Chu now runs most of her famous specialised walking tours, veteran tour guide Geraldene does still organise tours, though mostly for established clients and professional researchers. Her various private tours lend a unique insight into Singapore's history, architecture, religions, botany and culture. Subject to availability, individuals can sometimes join her group tours. Email for details.

#### Food Safari Tours

FOOD TOUR

(☎6438 4038; [www.makansutra.com](http://www.makansutra.com); tours from S\$160) Runs four-hour foodie tours, usually including three pit-stops. Options include the North-South-East-West Tour (street food), Multicultural Tour (Little India, Chinatown, Geylang and Katong), Uniquely Singapore Tour (*bak kut teh*, fish-head curry, chicken-rice) and Midnight Tour (duh!).



## Festivals & Events

With so many cultures and religions, there are an astounding number of colourful celebrations in Singapore. Some have fixed dates, but Hindus, Muslims and Chinese follow a lunar calendar that varies annually. Check out [www.yoursingapore.com](http://www.yoursingapore.com) for exact dates and full event listings.

### Thaipusam

HINDU

Usually held in February, this dramatic Hindu festival sees devotees pierced with *ka-vadis* (heavy metal frames decorated with peacock feathers, fruit and flowers) walk from from Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple to Chettiar Hindu Temple.

### Chingay

CULTURE

([www.chingay.org.sg](http://www.chingay.org.sg)) Singapore's biggest street party, held on the 22nd day after Chinese New Year.

### Mosaic Music Festival

MUSIC

([www.mosaicmusicfestival.com](http://www.mosaicmusicfestival.com)) A 10-day feast of music in March showcasing world music, jazz and indie acts, and numerous free events.

### World Gourmet Summit

FOOD

([www.worldgourmetsummit.com](http://www.worldgourmetsummit.com)) A lip-smacking gathering of top chefs for ten days of masterclasses, workshops and lavish dinners in late April or early May.

### Singapore Arts Festival

CULTURE

([www.singaporeartsfest.com](http://www.singaporeartsfest.com)) Held in May or June, the National Arts Council's premier arts festival delivers world-class music, dance, drama, and art.

### Great Singapore Sale

SHOPPING

([www.greatsingaporesale.com.sg](http://www.greatsingaporesale.com.sg)) Eight credit-crunching weeks of sales starting in late May. For the best bargains, dive in during the first two weeks.

### Singapore Food Festival

FOOD

([www.singaporefoodfestival.com](http://www.singaporefoodfestival.com)) A month-long feast of food stalls, tours, special events, and cooking demos held each July.

### Singapore National Day

PARADE

([www.ndp.org.sg](http://www.ndp.org.sg)) Patriotic revelry, with extravagant processions, military parades and fireworks on 9 August.

### Hungry Ghost Festival

CHINESE

Fires, food offerings and Chinese opera honour roaming spirits at this traditional August festival.

## Formula One Grand Prix

([www.f1singapore.com](http://www.f1singapore.com)) Singapore has bragging rights for hosting the world's first after-dark Formula 1, held in late September.

## Sleeping

Sleeping in Singapore is expensive. Budget travellers have it best, as hostel rooms can be had for as little as S\$20 a night. Most mid-range hotels are more about location than quality, while at the other end of the scale, many of Singapore's luxury digs offer history, cutting-edge design, or resort-style lushness.

Solid midrange options line the Singapore River, while Orchard Rd and the Colonial District groan under the weight of high-end chain hotels. Boutique midrange hotels convene around Chinatown. Both Chinatown and Little India offer solid budget options. If you want to be close to the beach, head to Sentosa Island.

For more information on sleeping in Singapore see p537.

### COLONIAL DISTRICT & THE QUAYS



#### Raffles Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6337 1886; [www.affleshotel.com](http://www.affleshotel.com); 1 Beach Rd; ste from S\$1400; 🍷🍷🍷; 🏨City Hall) For colonial-era luxury, it's hard to beat this 125-year-old icon. Rooms feature spacious parlours, verandahs, lazily swirling ceiling fans and a Singapore Sling from the Long Bar, while the rooftop pool, rambling gardens and historic bars offer perfect backdrops for languid posing. A dress code is in effect, so ditch those sleeveless shirts, sandals or grubby backpacker threads.



#### Naumi

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6403 6000; [www.naumihotel.com](http://www.naumihotel.com); 41 Seah Street; S\$340-400; 🍷🍷🍷; 🏨Esplanade, City Hall) Naumi is dressed so sharply in glass and steel you could get cut just by looking. It balances cool looks with lots of silk, leather and fluffy pillows. The small rooftop infinity pool offers jaw-dropping views across to neighbouring Raffles Hotel.

#### Fullerton Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6733 8388; [www.fullertonhotel.com](http://www.fullertonhotel.com); 1 Fullerton Sq; r incl breakfast from S\$515; 🍷🍷🍷; 🏨Raffles Place) Occupying what was once Singapore's magnificent, Palladian-style general post office, the lavish Fullerton offers elegant, conservative rooms, with muted tones and views of the inner atrium, water-front or skyline. Pool aficionados will swoon



## BOOKING ON THE FLY

If you arrive in Singapore without a hotel booking, the efficient **Singapore Hotel Association** ([www.stayinsingapore.com.sg](http://www.stayinsingapore.com.sg)) has desks at Changi Airport Terminals 1, 2 and 3. There are dozens of hotels on its lists, starting from S\$33 a night. There's no charge for the service, and promotional or discounted rates, when available, are passed on to you. You can also book the hotels on their website.

over the 25m showpiece pool, complete with river and skyline views. Close by, sister property **Fullerton Bay Hotel** (Map p478; ☎6333 8388; [www.fullertonbayhotel.com](http://www.fullertonbayhotel.com); 80 Collyer Quay; 🏨Raffles Place) serves up flashy bay-facing rooms at similar rates.

#### Ritz-Carlton Millenia Singapore

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6337 8888; [www.ritzcarlton.com/singapore](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/singapore); 7 Raffles Ave; r from S\$912; 🍷🍷🍷; 🏨Promenade) Not every hotel boasts an art collection with works by Warhol, Chihuly and Hockney, but then few hotels match the sophistication of this one. Live it up with obscenely comfortable feather beds and pillows, and marbled bathrooms with skyline views. Service is near-faultless, and culture vultures can enjoy a self-guided audio tour of the superlative in-house art. Check online for discounts of up to 50%.

#### Fort Canning Hotel

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6559 6770; [www.hfcsingapore.com](http://www.hfcsingapore.com); 11 Canning Walk; s/d incl breakfast from S\$350/375; 🍷🍷🍷; 🏨Dhoby Ghaut) An absolutely drop-dead gorgeous refit of a colonial complex at the top of Fort Canning Park. Rooms here are the epitome of modern chic, though the open bathroom in some means you'll need to be more than 'just friends' if sharing a room. Deluxe garden rooms have a small but cosy outdoor deck for lounging, and all guests are treated to complimentary drinks between 6pm and 8pm.

#### Gallery Hotel

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6849 8686; [www.galleryhotel.com.sg](http://www.galleryhotel.com.sg); 1 Nanson Rd; d incl breakfast from S\$320; 🍷🍷🍷; 🏨Clarke Quay) The Gallery remains one of Singapore's truly boutique hotels. Sure, guests have to switch elevators on the 4th floor to get to the rooms but knock-down online deals bring you top-end rooms at midrange

prices. Its grey fascia is studded with primary-coloured window boxes and rooms feature retro furnishings, steel beams and frosted-glass bathroom walls. The glass rooftop pool and free internet access are bonuses.

### Five Stones Hostel

HOSTEL \$

(Map p478; ☎6535 5607; www.fivestoneshostel.com; 61 South Bridge Rd; dm incl breakfast S\$30-37, r incl breakfast S\$105-110; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Clarke Quay) Five Stones is an old-school Singaporean game, and it's local cultural references that inspire the bright, funky murals at this up-beat hostel. Perks include comfy orthopedic mattresses in both the dorms and private rooms, modern bathrooms, free breakfast and wi-fi, and an enviable location within walking distance of the Quays, Chinatown, the CBD and the Colonial District.

### Marina Bay Sands

HOTEL \$\$\$

(☎6688 8897; www.marinabaysands.com; 10 Bayfront Avenue; r S\$525; 🍷🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Bayfront) Part of the ambitious Marina Bay Sands casino/retail complex, the Sands hotel is famed for its amazing rooftop infinity pool, which straddles across the roofs of the three hotel buildings. Hotel rooms are spacious, modern and comfortable, though admittedly cookie-cutter in style. A good choice for casino and mall fans; check online for the best deals. Marina Bay Sands is directly east of the CBD, on the opposite side of Marina Bay.

### Robertson Quay Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p478; ☎6735 3333; www.robertsonquayhotel.com.sg; 15 Merbau Rd; r S\$200; 🍷🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Fort Canning) Probably the best-value hotel along the river, this medieval-castle-like circular tower has immaculate albeit unadventurous rooms with cheesy wallpaper and throwaway wall art, and a surprisingly pretty palm-fringed rooftop swimming pool. Internet discounts of up to 35% are often available.

### Ibis Singapore on Bencoolen

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p486; ☎6593 2888; www.ibishotel.com; 170 Bencoolen St; r from S\$200; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Bugis) With their clean rooms decked out in pine and orangey hues, LCD TVs, comfy beds and great city views, the Ibis group probably hopes visitors extend their stay to match the length of the hotel's name.

## CHINATOWN



BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(☎6595 1388; www.wangzhotel.com; 231 Outram Rd; r S\$228-408; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Outram Park) Another boutique newcomer, curvaceous Wangz

sits just west of Chinatown. Its 41 rooms are smart and modern, sexed up with contemporary local art, sublimely comfortable beds, iPod docking stations and sleek bathrooms. Further perks include an in-house gym and a rooftop lounge serving well-mixed drinks.



BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p482; ☎6521 9000; www.klapsons.com; 15 Hoe Chiang Rd; r from S\$290; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Tanjong Pagar) New-kid Klapsons delivers Modernist-inspired luxury and stunning design features (reception is in a steel sphere suspended above a pool of water). Rooms are beautifully textured and individually designed, each with soft goose-down bedding, showpiece showers and a personal Nespresso machine. Refreshingly for an upscale hotel, both the minibar and wi-fi are complimentary.

### New Majestic Hotel

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p482; ☎6347 1927; www.newmajestichotel.com; 31-37 Bukit Pasoh Rd; r incl breakfast from S\$468; 🍷🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Outram Park) Even within Chinatown's burgeoning boutique hotel market, the New Majestic continues to impress. Vintage and designer furniture define the 30 rooms – top choices include the private garden suite, attic rooms with loft beds and 6m-high ceilings, and the fabulous aquarium room with a glass-encased bathtub as its central feature. Discounts can bring rates down to less than S\$315.

### Club

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p482; ☎6808 2188; www.theclub.com.sg; 28 Ann Siang Rd; r from S\$276; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Outram Park) Behind its crisp colonial-era facade, the Club keeps things svelte and light with 28 spacious, minimalist, white-and-black rooms spiked with coloured mood lighting. A-list in-house hangouts include rooftop bar Ying Yang and designer whiskey bar B28, though most punters seem to prefer mingling at nearby La Terrazza.

### Scarlet

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p482; ☎6511 3333; www.thescarlethotel.com; 33 Erskine Rd; r from S\$374; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Outram Park) Despite the sexy marketing, Scarlet's rooms are actually pretty homely – think cottage chic – decorated with soothing wooden furniture, thick drapes and tasteful artwork. Many of them are windowless, but the interiors are far from gloomy thanks to the cheerful decor. The wi-fi in the lobby only reaches some rooms. Discounts of 30% are common.

**Hotel 1929**

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p482; ☎6347 1929; www.hotel1929.com; 50 Keong Saik Rd; s/d incl breakfast from S\$197/290; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Outram Park) It's slick, but not quite in the same class as its big brother, the New Majestic. Rooms are tight, but good use is made of limited space, and interiors are cheerily festooned with vintage designer furniture (look out for reproduction Eames and Jacobson) and technicolor mosaics. Terrace suites feature terrace bathtubs, and discounts mean you can snag some rooms for under S\$200.

**Wink Hostel**

HOSTEL \$

(Map p482; ☎6222 2940; www.winkhostel.com; 8 Mosque Street; s/d pod S\$50/90; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Chinatown) Centrally located in a restored Chinatown shophouse, flashbacker favourite Wink combines hostel and capsule-hotel concepts. Instead of bunks, dorms feature private, soundproof 'pods', each with a comfortable mattress, coloured mood lighting, adjacent locker and enough room to sit up in. Communal bathrooms come with rainforest showerheads, while the in-house kitchenette, laundry and lounge areas crank up the homely factor.

**Fernloft**

HOSTEL \$

(Map p482; ☎6323 3221; www.fernloft.com; 2nd fl, 5 Banda St 02-92; dm S\$22, r from S\$65; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Chinatown) In a housing block overlooking the Buddha Tooth Relic Temple, this compact branch of the excellent Fernloft hostel chain offers only two private rooms, but they are large and pleasant. The dorm room is clean and tidy, with comfortable wooden-framed beds. Although rooms are windowless, the corner-terrace seating overlooking the green is a lovely spot to hang out.

**Pillows & Toast**

HOSTEL \$

(Map p482; ☎6220 4653; 40 Mosque St; dm incl breakfast S\$28-39; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Chinatown) It's dorm beds only at this super friendly, centrally located hostel, but the rooms are bright and clean and come with comfy wooden-framed bunk beds. Common areas are small but treated with TLC.

**LITTLE INDIA****Wanderlust**

BOUTIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p486; ☎6396 3322; www.wanderlusthotel.com; 2 Dickson Rd; r incl breakfast from S\$232; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Bugis) Wanderlust is genuinely boutique, with highly imaginative, individually designed rooms – think monochromatic

'Pantone' rooms, comic-book 'Mono' rooms, and 'Whimsical' rooms with themes like 'tree' and 'space'. Extra perks include excellent service, a funky French noshery, not to mention free wi-fi.

**Albert Court Village Hotel**

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p486; ☎6339 3939; www.stayvillage.com; 180 Albert St; r from S\$200; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Little India) This splendid, colonial-era hotel, a short walk south of Little India, offers top-notch service and rooms with all the standard mod cons, including a choice of fan or air-con. The promotional rates go as low as S\$150, with the best deals to be had online.

**Perak Hotel**

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p486; ☎6299 7733; www.peraklodge.net; 12 Perak Rd; r incl breakfast S\$150-185; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Little India) Located on a quiet side street in the heart of Little India, this long-time favourite fuses a handsome colonial exterior with a soothing Eastern interior, complete with meditation spaces. Rooms are comfortable and well furnished, staff members are welcoming and helpful, and the rates include free wi-fi.

**hangout@mt.emily**

HOSTEL \$\$\$

(Map p490; ☎6438 5588; www.hangouthotels.com; 10A Upper Wilkie Rd; dm/d from S\$40/115; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Little India, Dhoby Ghaut) You'll find some of Singapore's swankiest dorms atop leafy Mount Emily, making this a quiet retreat rather than a central hangout. Pimped with murals by local art students, the vibrant dorms and private rooms are immaculate, as are the bathrooms. It also has a lovely rooftop terrace, free internet and cosy lounging areas. Book online – it's cheaper.

**Hive**

HOSTEL \$

(Map p486; ☎6341 5041; www.thehivebackpackers.com; 269A Lavender St; dm incl breakfast S\$22-24, s/d/tr incl breakfast from S\$40/60/105; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Boon Keng) The Hive's friendliness and cleanliness go a long way towards making up for a slightly inconvenient location. Although the dorms lack natural light, they're comfy, and offer a female-only option. The bright, colourful private rooms are excellent value, and there's a pleasant lounge/dining area to boot.

**InnCrowd**

HOSTEL \$

(Map p486; ☎6296 9169; www.the-inncrowd.com; 73 Dunlop St; dm/d/tr incl breakfast S\$20/59/79; 🍷🍷🍷; 🚶Little India) As close to a typical backpacker hostel as you'd find in Singapore. Clean accommodation, living areas



## STUCK AT THE AIRPORT?

If you're only in Singapore for a short time or have an endless wait between connections, try the **Ambassador Transit Hotel** (Terminal 1 6542 5538, Terminal 2 6542 8122, Terminal 3 6507 9788; [www.airport-hotel.com.sg](http://www.airport-hotel.com.sg); s/d S\$76.51/91.81; ㊚). Rates quoted are for the first six hours and each additional hour block thereafter is S\$16.48; rooms don't have windows and there are budget singles (S\$47.08 for 6 hours) with shared bathrooms. The Terminal 1 branch has a sauna, gym and outdoor pool.

The only swish option at Changi Airport is Terminal 3's **Crowne Plaza Hotel** (Terminal 3 5300; [www.cpchangiairport.com](http://www.cpchangiairport.com); r from S\$250; ㊚). The business-oriented focus shows through its sleek lines, geometric-patterned carpets and (over)use of wood panels.

where travellers like to hang and sweet staff. The atmosphere's decidedly convivial, with free lockers and internet, discounted tickets to sights and cheap Tiger draft beer on tap.

### Mayo Inn

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p486; ㊚6295 6631; [www.mayoinn.com](http://www.mayoinn.com); 9 Jln Besar; r from S\$110; ㊚㊚㊚; ㊚Bugs) New, spotless clean midrange hotel with good-sized, IKEA-fitted rooms and sparkling bathrooms. More expensive rooms come with their own small roof terrace.

### Prince of Wales

HOSTEL \$

(Map p486; ㊚6299 0130; [www.pow.com.sg](http://www.pow.com.sg); 101 Dunlop St; dm/d S\$20/60; ㊚㊚㊚; ㊚Little India) Australian-style pub and hostel, featuring a spit-and-sawdust live-music pub downstairs and clean, brightly painted dorms and private rooms upstairs. The noise won't suit everyone, but it's a fun place to stay, is very well run and is deservedly popular. The free breakfast includes fresh coffee and fruit as well as the usual buttered toast.

## ORCHARD ROAD

### Goodwood Park Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p490; ㊚6737 7411; [www.goodwoodparkhotel.com](http://www.goodwoodparkhotel.com); 22 Scotts Rd; r from S\$328; ㊚㊚㊚; ㊚Orchard) A venerable slumber spot dating back to 1900, the Goodwood Park is both classic and elegant. Rooms include artful black-and-white photos of Singapore, plush furnishings and tastefully hidden TVs and minibars. While we adore the choice of two swimming pools, we're less than impressed by the S\$30 wi-fi fee.

### Quincy

BOULIQUE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p490; ㊚6738 5888; [www.quincy.com.sg](http://www.quincy.com.sg); 22 Mount Elizabeth; s/d from S\$295/355; ㊚㊚㊚; ㊚Orchard) Swish, ultramodern rooms come with large double beds and plenty of space. Everything here is included in the price – wi-fi, use of the gym and the glass-enclosed

balcony pool, happy-hour drinks and even a slightly gimmicky three meals a day. (In food-crazy Singapore, who wants to eat three meals a day in a hotel?)

### Elizabeth Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p490; ㊚6885 7888; [www.theelizabeth.com.sg](http://www.theelizabeth.com.sg); 24 Mt Elizabeth Rd; r from S\$160; ㊚㊚㊚; ㊚Orchard) One of a cluster of three hotels located in a quiet nook off Orchard Rd, the Elizabeth is old but has aged gracefully. Rooms are warm and welcoming, with lots of wooden furniture and soft lighting. Guests can chomp on excellent wood-fired pizzas at in-house Modesto's.

## SENTOSA ISLAND

### TOP CHOICE Capella Singapore

RESORT \$\$\$

(Map p499; ㊚6591 5000; [www.capellahotels.com](http://www.capellahotels.com)/singapore; 1 The Knolls; d S\$700; ㊚㊚㊚) The Capella Singapore resort is arguably the crème de la crème of Sentosa's, possibly even Singapore's, accommodation options, with majestic whitewashed colonial architecture, lavish pools and gardens, and beautifully appointed rooms, villas and manors.

### The Sentosa

RESORT \$\$\$

(Map p499; ㊚6275 0331; [www.thesentosa.com](http://www.thesentosa.com); 2 Bukit Manis Rd; r S\$285-S\$525 (breakfast not included); ㊚㊚㊚) The salubrious five-star Sentosa resort and spa is a low-rise cliff-top belle, replete with contemporary furnishings, the romantic restaurant Cliff (p527), Singapore's only garden spa – Spa Botanica (p512) – and peacocks wandering aimlessly underneath frangipani trees. Check the website for promo deals.

### Siloso Beach Resort

RESORT \$\$\$

(Map p499; ㊚6722 3333; [www.silosobeachresort.com](http://www.silosobeachresort.com); 51 Imbiah Walk; r incl breakfast from S\$230, ste from S\$450, villa from S\$1000; ㊚㊚㊚) A sanctuary unto itself, Siloso Beach Resort is designed with lots of ecofriendly touches (the

natural spring-fed pool has its own filtration system, gardens on top of buildings lower ambient temperatures and some rooms are built around trees). Rooms are comfortable enough to tempt you into staying in, but the landscaped grounds, 95m-long pool and nearby Siloso Beach will ensure you get your fix of the sun.

## Eating

Singapore is an international culinary hotspot. The locals' obsession with all things edible borders on the manic and everyone is a self-proclaimed expert on where to find the best *nasi lemak*, chicken-rice or *murta-bak*. While cuisines span everything from classic French to Modern Australian, it's the Chinese, Indian, Malay and unique Peranakan (Malay-style sauces with Chinese ingredients) dishes you're really here for. Picky local palates have set high standards across the board, from Michelin-chef hotspots, to dirt-cheap hawker centres and food courts, where memorable bites cost as little as S\$3. So be adventurous, join the longest queues, and read what the locals are saying at [www.hungrygowhere.com](http://www.hungrygowhere.com), [www.makansutra.com](http://www.makansutra.com) and [www.ladyironchef.com](http://www.ladyironchef.com).

## COLONIAL DISTRICT

### **Jaän**

FRENCH \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎9199 9008; [www.jaan.com.sg](http://www.jaan.com.sg); 2 Stamford Rd, Swissôtel The Stamford; S\$238, with wine pairings S\$398; ☺lunch Mon-Sat, dinner daily; 📍City Hall) Perched 70 floors above Singapore, chic, intimate Jaän is home to young-gun French chef Julien Royer and his show-stopping Gallic creations; think wild langoustine with fregola sarda, grey chanterelle, rosemary-smoked organic egg and black Périgord truffle. The set 7-course menu is a revelation. Always book ahead, and request a window seat overlooking Marina Bay Sands for a bird's-eye view of the nightly lightshow.

### **Flutes at the Fort**

INTERNATIONAL \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6338 8770; [www.flutes.com.sg](http://www.flutes.com.sg); Fort Canning Park, entrance via 23B Coleman St; mains S\$38-48; ☺lunch & dinner Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm Sun; 📍City Hall) In a 1908 bungalow on the edge of Fort Canning Park, fine-dining Flutes seduces with its lush setting, attentive service and imaginative mod-Oz flavours. If the budget permits, opt for the Chef's Table menu (S\$108), whose showstoppers might include melt-in-the-mouth sea scallops with

kataifi prawn roll, micro celery, nori cracker and chill-lime dressing. Book ahead.

### **Chef Chan's Restaurant**

CHINESE \$\$\$

(Map p478; [www.chefchanrestaurant.com.sg](http://www.chefchanrestaurant.com.sg); 93 Stamford Rd, 01-06 National Museum; set menus from S\$38; ☺lunch & dinner; 📍Dhoby Ghaut) Eponymous chef, sick of cooking for over 200 people in his large restaurant, closes shop and opens tiny restaurant with nine tables and a daily changing set menu. While we love the antique furnishings, even they pale in comparison to dishes like sauteed scallops with mango and fresh milk, or steamed garoupa fish with black fungus and red dates.

### **My Humble House**

CHINESE \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6423 1881; [www.myhumblehouse.com.sg](http://www.myhumblehouse.com.sg); 8 Raffles Ave, 02-27, Esplanade Mall; lunch/dinner set menu S\$60-80/\$100-120; ☺; 📍City Hall) Humble is not the first word that comes to mind when you clap eyes on the outlandish decor (designed by Chinese artist Zhang Jin Jie) and set menus with names like 'Someone is Singing Behind the Mountain'. If you're longing for bold dishes like steamed Boston lobster with Hua Diao wine topped with steamed dried scallop and egg, book a table and dress up. There is a dedicated vegetarian menu for herbivore foodies.

### **Saveur**

FRENCH \$\$\$

(Map p478; [www.saveur.sg](http://www.saveur.sg); 5 Purvis St; mains S\$10-24; 📍Esplanade) It may have sexed up since its *kopitiam* (old-style Chinese coffee shop) days in Katong, but Saveur remains true to democratic prices and contemporary French-inspired brilliance. Snack on the likes of duck rilette with butter bread, then fill up on dishes such as angel-hair pasta with sherry minced pork and sakura ebi, or crispy barramundi with crab potato and French bean. No bookings.

### **Raffles City**

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p478; [www.rafflescity.com.sg](http://www.rafflescity.com.sg); 252 North Bridge Rd; 📍City Hall) You'll find several excellent eating options at this mall, most located in the confusing basement warren. **Hand Burger** flips gourmet (albeit small) burgers, **Skinny Pizza** is popular for its gourmet-topped pizzas made with flat cracker bread, punters queue out the door at **Din Tai Fung** for divine *xiao long bao* (soup dumplings), or guzzle German beer and munch on sausages at **Brotzeit**.

### **Wah Lok**

CHINESE \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6311 8188; 2nd fl, Carlton Hotel, 76 Bras Basah Rd; mains from S\$20; 📍City Hall, Bras Basah)

A hit with families, long-running Wah Lok peddles seriously fine Peking duck and dim sum. Just leave room for the sublimely flaky *char siew soh* (roast pork pastry) and flavour-packed tofu with broccoli.

### Yet Con

CHINESE \$

(Map p478; 25 Purvis St; chicken-rice S\$5.50; ☺10am-10pm; **M**City Hall) There's no designer decor or charm at this septuagenarian restaurant, just unbeatable Hainanese chicken-rice, packed with flavour and served to faithful suits, old-timers and 20-something food nerds. Don't be put off by the crowds – turn over is usually fast.

### YY Kafei Dian

CHINESE \$

(Map p478; 37 Beach Rd; meals from S\$3; ☺7.30am-10.30pm; **M**Esplanade) Channeling old-school Hainanese eateries with its ceiling fans, linoleum floors, round marble-top tables and wooden chairs, the coffee shop is an all-day staple. Start the day with soft *kaya* (coconut jam) buns, half-boiled eggs (go nuts with the condiments) and a thick, sweet *kopi* (coffee).

### Kopitiam

COFFEE SHOP \$

(Map p478; www.kopitiam.biz; cnr Bras Basah Rd & Bencoolen St; ☺24hr; **M**City Hall, Bras Basah) A top spot in the district for a late-night feed, this branch of the Kopitiam chain is brisk and blindingly bright, so if it's a late, boozy night grab a table outside where the light is more friendly. The food is uniformly good and you won't pay much more than S\$6 for a meal.

### THE QUAYS



### Jumbo Seafood

SEAFOOD \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6532 3435; www.jumboseafood.com.sg; 30 Merchant Rd, at 01-01/02 Riverside Point; dishes from S\$8, chilli crab around S\$48 per kg; **M**Clarke Quay) If you're lusting for chilli crab, indulge right here. The gravy is sublimely sweet and nutty, with just the right amount of chilli. Make sure to order some yeasty, fried *man-tou* buns to dip with. While all of Jumbo's outlets have the dish down to an art, this one has the best riverside location. One kilo of crab is enough for two.

### Coriander Leaf

FUSION \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6732 3354; www.corianderleaf.com; River Valley Rd, 02-03, 3A Merchant Court; mains S\$25-40; ☺lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat; ☎**M**Clarke Quay) Well-executed, cross-cultural experimentation is what you get at this highly regarded bistro. Celebrate world harmony with the likes of lentil tagliatelle with coriander-chilli pesto, pita chips and eggplant rata-

ouille, or grain-fed Angus ribeye steak with kimchi rice and spicy Asian eggplant.

### MARINA BAY



### Din Tai Fung

TAIWANESE \$

(Map p478; www.dintaifung.com.sg; 2 Bayfront Ave, The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands; ☺buns from S\$3.80, dumplings from S\$6.80; **M**Bayfront, Marina Bay) Even hype-resistant luminaries such as chef Anthony Bourdain have declared that this chain produces the world's best dumplings (though some insist that only applies to the Taiwanese original on Orchard Rd). The signature *xiao long bao* are nevertheless sublime, the shrimp-pork wonton soup delectable, and the free-flowing jasmine tea appreciated.

### DB Bistro Moderne

FRENCH, MEDITERRANEAN \$\$\$

(Map p478; ☎6688 8525; 2 Bayfront Ave, The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands; 2/3-course set lunch S\$42/52, dinner mains S\$22-46; **M**Bayfront, Marina Bay) Singaporean outpost of French chef Daniel Boulud, this smart yet relaxed hotspot is the best of Marina Bay Sands' celeb chef eateries. Comfort grub standouts include succulent seafood risotto and a decadent, foie-gras stuffed DB burger. Choose from almost 30 wines by glass, including drops from lesser-known boutique wineries. Book ahead if dining Thursday to Sunday.

### Pizzeria Mozza

ITALIAN \$\$\$

(Map p478; www.pizzeriamozza.com; 2 Bayfront Ave, The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands; pizzas S\$18-37, mains S\$25-36; **M**Bayfront, Marina Bay) This dough-kneading winner is co-owned by New York culinary superstar Mario Batali. It's also one of the few celebrity eateries at Marina Bay Sands that won't have you mortgaging your house. While both the antipasti and pasta dishes are solid, the star turn is the wood-fired pizzas, famed for their addictive, crispy crust.

### CHINATOWN & THE CBD



### Blue Ginger

PERANAKAN \$\$

(Map p482; ☎6222 3928; www.theblueginger.com; 97 Tanjong Pagar Rd; mains S\$10-30; **M**Tanjong Pagar) A perennial favourite, famed for its beautifully cooked Peranakan food, a unique cuisine fusing Chinese and Malay influences. Savour rich, spicy, sour flavours in Blue Ginger's signature *ayam panggang* (grilled chicken in coconut and spices). Other winners include the soulful *bakwan kepit-ing* (minced pork and crabmeat ball soup) and *sambal terong goreng* (spicy fried eggplant). Bookings recommended.



**Maxwell Rd Hawker Centre** HAWKER \$  
(Map p482; cnr Maxwell Rd & South Bridge Rd; ☺ individual stalls vary; 📍 Chinatown) One of Chinatown's most accessible hawker centres, Maxwell Rd is a user-friendly spot to chomp and slurp on Singapore street-food classics. While stalls slip in and out of favour with fickle Singaporeans, enduring favourites include **Tian Tian Hainanese Chicken Rice** (Stall 10; chicken rice S\$3; ☺ 11am-8pm Tue-Sun), **Maxwell Fuzhou Oyster Cake** (Stall 5; oyster cake S\$1.50; ☺ 9.30am-8.30pm Mon-Sat), and **Fried Sweet Potato Dumpling** (Stall 76; snacks from S\$0.50; ☺ 1-8pm Wed-Mon).

### Esquina

TAPAS \$\$

(Map p482; www.esquina.com.sg; 16 Jiak Chuan Rd; dishes S\$12-24.50; ☺ lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat; 📍 Outram Park) Co-owned by UK Michelin-starred chef Jason Atherton, Esquina has tongues wagging with its classic-with-a-twist Spanish morsels. Scan the paper placemat menu for standouts like the palate-shaking, wasabi-spiked scallops with ceviche and radish salsa, or melt-in-your-mouth Iberico pork and foie gras sliders, best devoured at the stainless steel bar while swilling a sherry and chatting to the chefs. No reservations.

### Chinatown Complex

HAWKER \$

(Map p482; 11 New Bridge Rd; ☺ individual stalls vary; 📍 Chinatown) Standouts at this labyrinthine hawker centre include **Lian He Ben Ji Claypot** (Stall 02-082; claypot dishes from S\$5; ☺ 4-10.30pm Fri-Wed) and **Xiu Ji Ikan Bilis Yong Tau Foo** (Stall 02-87/88; dishes S\$2-4; ☺ 5.45am-3pm). The latter is famed for its dry *bee hoon* (vermicelli noodles), topped with *ikan bilis* (dried anchovies) and accompanied by a bowl of *yong taufoo* (consomme). Optional add-ins include homemade fishcakes and tofu.

### Latteria Mozzarella Bar

ITALIAN \$\$

(Map p482; 📍 6866 1988; www.latteriamb.com; 40 Duxton Hill; mains S\$25-35; 📍 Tanjong Pagar) While we adore the leafy alfresco deck, the draw here is the silky mozzarella. From *burrata* (cream-filled mozzarella) to *affumicata* (smoked), its many variations are flown in from Italy twice weekly to star in modern classic dishes like *stracciatella* with eggplant caponata and pine nuts.

### Cumi Bali

INDONESIAN \$\$

(Map p482; www.cumibali.com; 66 Tanjong Pagar Rd; dishes S\$6.50-28; ☺ closed Sun; 📍 Tanjong Pagar) Lo-fi decor meets mouthwatering Indonesian grub at this unsung gem. Tuck into delicate nasi goreng (opt for the lamb, not

the chicken), grilled-to-perfection *sate madaura* (a Javanese-style chicken satay), and the restaurant's namesake dish, consisting of grilled squid in a luscious spicy paste.

### Peach Garden

CHINESE \$\$\$

(Map p478; 📍 6535 7833; www.peachgarden.com.sg; Level 33, OCBC Centre, 65 Chulia St; set menu from S\$38; 📍 Raffles Place) For a Chinese restaurant with a view, it's tough to beat this one. The food and service are immaculate too. Try to reserve a window table well in advance and tuck into superb dim sum, or equally sublime dishes like double-boiled chicken soup with sea whelk and fish maw, or stewed noodle with shredded pork, black fungus and bean paste.

### Ya Kun Kaya Toast

COFFEE SHOP \$

(Map p482; www.yakun.com; 01-01 Far East Sq, 18 China St; kaya toast set S\$4; ☺ 7.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-5pm Sat & Sun; 📍 Chinatown, Raffles Place) A chain of Ya Kun outlets has mushroomed across Singapore, but this one, with terrace seating alongside it, is the most atmospheric and the closest geographically to the 1944 original. Perfect for breakfast, the speciality is *kaya* toast served with runny eggs (sprinkle them with black pepper like the locals do) and strong coffee.

### Ci Yan Organic Vegetarian Health Food

VEGETARIAN \$

(Map p482; 2 Smith St; mains S\$5-8; ☺ noon-10pm; 📍 Chinatown) Friendly Ci Yan peddles organic, flesh-free dishes in the heart of Chinatown. Scan the blackboard for the day's small selection of offerings, which might include golden curry puffs, durian swiss rolls, or wholemeal hamburgers. Our favourite is the brown-rice set menu, which comes with soul-coaxing Chinese vegetables and stew.

### Da Dong Restaurant

CHINESE \$\$\$

(Map p482; 📍 6221 3822; 39 Smith St; yum cha S\$2.80-4.80, mains from S\$12; ☺ 11am-11pm Mon-Fri, 9am-11pm Sat & Sun; 📍 Chinatown) One of Chinatown's longest lasting restaurants first opened its doors in 1928. These days, it still serves up some of the best dim sum in town. Longevity hasn't equated to great service, but with *char siew* (barbecue pork) buns this good, who cares?

### Tong Heng

BAKERY \$

(Map p482; 285 South Bridge Rd; snacks from S\$1; ☺ 9am-10pm; 📍 Chinatown) Hit the spot at this veteran pastry shop, locally revered for its melt-in-your-mouth egg tarts. Just leave

## OFF THE RADAR HAWKER HIGHS

Chicken-rice and oyster cake at Maxwell Rd Hawker Centre: check. *Bee hoon* at Chinatown Complex: check. *Murtabak* at Tekka Centre: check. Once you've ploughed through Singapore's central hawker centres, head further out to where the real street-food geeks click their sticks.

**Chomp Chomp Food Centre** (20 Kensington Park Rd; ☺ stalls vary; ☎ 73, 📍 Toa Payoh) Despite its privileged status as (arguably) Singapore's best hawker centre, this evening option in Serangoon Gardens gives off a chilled, convivial vibe, with packs of young Singaporeans gossiping happily over giant jugs of sugar cane juice each night. Eavesdrop over tender, juicy barbecue stingray from **Chomp Chomp Hai Wei Yuan Seafood BBQ** (Stall 1; stingray from S\$10; ☺ 5pm-midnight Tue-Sun), where stock-standard sweet chilli sauce is ditched for a zestier Melakan-style chinchalok sauce, made with fermented shrimp or krill. Leave room for moreish carrot cake from the **Carrot Cake Stall** (Stall 36; cakes from S\$2; ☺ 5.30pm-midnight, closed alternative Tues), and prawn Hokkien noodles from **Ah Hock Fried Hokkien Noodle** (Stall 27; dishes from S\$3; ☺ 5-11pm daily).

**Old Airport Rd Food Centre** (Map p492; Block 51 Old Airport Rd; ☺ 10am-late; 📍 Mountbatten) You'll find a few more out-of-towners here than at Chomp Chomp, but the grub is no less authentic. The Hokkien fried mee (noodles) at **Na Sing Hokkien Fried Mee** (Stall 01-32; dishes from S\$3; ☺ 11am-7pm) are obligatory, while other winners include sweet 'n' savoury rojak (salad of pineapple, cucumber, you tiao, turnip, crushed peanuts and homemade Rojak sauce) from **Toa Payoh Rojak** (Stall 01-108; dishes from S\$3; ☺ noon-8pm Mon-Sat), and cooked-on-the-spot sweet potato porridge from **Lau Pa Sat Taiwan Porridge** (Stall 01-167; dishes from S\$4; ☺ 4.30-11.30pm Tue-Sun).

room for the slightly charred perfection of the *char siew su* (barbecue pork puff). Oh, and did we mention the sublime coconut tarts?

## EAST COAST



## Maeda

JAPANESE \$\$\$

(Map p492; ☎ 6345 0745; 467 Joo Chiat Rd; dishes from S\$10; ☺ dinner Tue-Sun; 📍 16) Superlatives fail to describe the authentic Osaka-style cuisine served up by owner and chef Maeda Hiroaki. Sweet, fresh sashimi is dotted with chrysanthemum flowers, and the menu features rare dishes like squid guts. Maeda works the sushi counter and is more than happy to down some sake with you. Can't decide what to order? Opt for the *omakase* menu (S\$90 to S\$150). Bookings recommended.



## Kim's Place Seafood

SEAFOOD \$\$

(Map p492; www.kims.com.sg; 37 Joo Chiat Place; mains S\$4-30; ☺ 11am-2.30am; 📍 16, 33, 📍 Eunos) Make time for a little feasting at heirloom Kim's Place Seafood. Must-tries include the insanely flavourful, sticky-sweet black pepper crab in claypot, the Hokkien mee, and the refreshing lemongrass jelly with lemon sorbet. Tip: go for the Sri Lankan crabs, which are fleshier than their Indonesian counterparts.

## East Coast Seafood Centre

SEAFOOD \$\$\$

(Map p492; 1202 East Coast Parkway; mains S\$15-75; ☺ dinner; 📍 48, 196) Overlooking the Straits of Singapore in the salty breeze, this renowned seafood centre boasts several excellent restaurants, all with outdoor seating. Don't miss the chilli crab, black-pepper crab and the intoxicating 'drunken' prawns. Best of the lot is **Long Beach** (www.longbeachseafood.com.sg; dishes S\$26-80; ☺ lunch & dinner).

## Sik Wai Sin Eating House

CHINESE \$\$

(Map p492; 287 Geylang Rd; mains S\$17-25; ☺ lunch & dinner daily; 📍 Kallang) Geylang is famous for its gut-rumbling food peddlers, and hot, loud, Cantonese Sik Wai Sin Eating House is living proof. Cult favourites include home-made tofu fried with giant prawns in egg sauce, double-boiled herbal soup, pork ribs with bitter melon and the signature steamed grass carp head in bean sauce.

## East Coast Lagoon Food Village

HAWKER \$

(Map p492; 1220 East Coast Parkway; dishes from S\$3; ☺ 8am-9pm; 📍 48, 196) There are few hawker centres with a better location. Tramp barefoot off the beach and order up some satay, seafood, or the uniquely Singaporean satay *bee hoon* from Meng Kee at stall 17. Expect to queue. Cheap beer and wine (!) are available.

**328 Katong Laksa**

(Map p492; 53 East Coast Rd; laksa from S\$4; ☺8am-10pm; ☑10, 14) Several laksa stalls along this stretch have long been bickering over who was first and best. They're all delicious, but this one is the most loved. The namesake dish is a bowl of rice noodles in a light curry broth made with coconut milk and Vietnamese coriander, and topped with shrimp and cockles. Order a side of *otah-otah* (spiced mackerel cake grilled in a banana leaf).

PERANAKAN \$

**Guan Hoe Soon**

(Map p492; 38 Joo Chiat Pl; mains from \$12; ☑16, 33, ☑Eunos) Famously, this is Singapore's oldest Peranakan restaurant (established 1953) and Lee Kuan Yew's favourite, but even boasts like that don't cut much ice with picky Singaporeans if the food doesn't match up. Fortunately, its fame hasn't inspired complacency and the Nonya food here is top notch. The definitive Peranakan *ayam buah keluak* (chicken with black nut) is a standout.

PERANAKAN \$\$

**Seng Kee Black****Chicken Herbal Soup**

(Map p492; 467 Changi Rd; dishes from S\$6; ☺5pm-4am; ☑Kembangan) Hot tropical nights, buzzing crowds and oh-so-good Chinese-Malay street food collide at Seng Kee, the best of a row of alfresco street-food joints just east of Katong. Hunt down a plastic table and get dirty over fruity Penang-style rojak; homemade bean curd with chicken floss; signature sesame oil chicken and their equally famous *qi*-soothing black chicken herbal soup.

CHINESE \$

**Djanoer Koening**

(Map p492; 191 Joo Chiat Rd; mains S\$6-9.50; ☺11am-9.30pm; ☑16) Simply decorated with Javanese water puppets, this casual, lo-fi nosh spot cooks up homely, soulful Javanese dishes. Gems include a wonderfully fragrant *bakso urat* (Indonesian soup with beef balls, noodles, spinach and fried bean curd) and a smoky, sticky bebek goreng/bakar sambal dewa (fried/grilled duck with chilli). Service is friendly and casual.

INDONESIAN \$

**Changi Village****Hawker Centre**

(2 Changi Village Rd; dishes from S\$3; ☺10.30am-11.30pm; ☑2, Tanah Merah) Row after row of stalls offering a plethora of food might bewilder most. But there's only one thing the locals come here for – the *nasi lemak*. Fragrant coconut rice is topped with fried

HAWKER CENTRE \$

chicken or fish, *ikan bilis* (fried anchovies) and sambal chilli. The original stall at 01-57 has spawned neighbouring imitators if you can't be bothered queuing.

**Rochor Beancurd**

SWEETS \$

(Map p492; 745 Geylang Rd; ☺24hr; ☑Paya Lebar) End on a sweet note at Rochor Beancurd, a tiny bolthole with an epic reputation. People head here from all over the city for a bowl of their obscenely fresh, silky beancurd (opt for it warm). Order a side of dough sticks and dip to your heart's content. Oh, did we mention the delicious egg tarts?

**Chin Mee Chin****Confectionery**

BREAKFAST, BAKERY \$

(Map p492; 204 East Coast Rd; dishes from S\$4; ☺8am-4pm Tue-Sun; ☑10, 14, 16) *Kaya* (jam made from coconut and egg) toast like grandma used to make. A nostalgia trip for many older Singaporeans, old-style bakeries like Chin Mee Chin are a dying breed, with their mosaic floors, wooden chairs and strong coffee. One of the few Singaporean breakfast joints that still makes its own *kaya*, apparently.

**DEMPSEY ROAD & HOLLAND VILLAGE****Au Jardin Les Amis**

FRENCH \$\$\$

(☎6466 8812; www.lesamis.com.sg; Cluny Rd, EJH Corner House, Singapore Botanic Gardens; set dinner menus from S\$200; ☺dinner daily, lunch Fri, brunch 11.30am-1.30pm Sun; ☑Botanic Gardens) If you plan on seducing someone, look no further – think romantic colonial-era bungalow, Botanic Gardens backdrop, and decadent French fare. Style up, forget the bill and steal a kiss from your sweetheart in the gardens afterwards. Daily dinner aside, there's a lunchtime sitting on Fridays (2/3 courses S\$58/70) and a Sunday brunch (S\$88). Book ahead.

**Halia**

FUSION \$\$\$

(☎6476 6711; www.halia.com.sg; Singapore Botanic Gardens, 1 Cluny Rd; mains S\$40-86; ☎; ☑Botanic Gardens) Beautifully nestled among ginger plants in the botanic gardens, Halia serves inspired fusion fare like pan-seared and crème brulee foie gras, caramelised fig and ice-wine jelly. Book a table on the verandah for a perfect romantic dinner, or savour and save with the good value set lunch (2/3 courses S\$28/32) Monday to Friday.

**Miao Yi Vegetarian****Restaurant**

VEGETARIAN \$\$

(☎6467 1331; 03-01/02, Coronation Shopping Plaza, 587 Bukit Timah Rd; dishes S\$5-15; ☎; ☑; ☑)



**Botanic Gardens**) Even carnivores can expect a little finger licking at this hidden gem, tucked away inside a dated suburban mall. The dishes practically sing with flavour, from the wonderfully textured spicy 'prawn' (crumbed soy with basil leaves, chilli and cashew nuts) to the legendary suckling 'pig', served with a moreish sweet soy sauce. Book ahead on weekends.

### Da Paolo Pizza Bar

ITALIAN \$\$

(www.dapaolo.com.sg; 44 Jln Merah Saga; pizzas \$S18-29; ☺lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, 9am-10.30pm Sat & Sun; 📍Holland Village) One of three Da Paolo outlets on the street – the fine-dining restaurant is next door and the gourmet deli at No 43 – this svelte bistro peddles bubbly, thin-crust pizzas that would make Italy proud. Dough aside, offerings include salads, salumi, cheeses, and an Italo-centric wine list. Weekend breakfast options include piadinas, eggs and pancakes.

### Jones the Grocer

CAFE, DELI \$\$

(www.jonesthegrocer.com; Dempsey Rd, Block 9; breakfast \$S6.50-20, mains \$S13.50-28; ☺9am-11pm Sun-Thu, to midnight Fri & Sat; ☎7, 75, 77, 106, 123, 174) Posh-nosh grocer Jones is the darling of the expat set. Scan the shelves for gourmet foodstuffs and wine, raid the fromagerie for artisan cheeses, or kick back with A-grade coffee, breakfast, salads, sandwiches, tapas, or heartier fare like organic beef burgers with Australian Tarago River blue cheese. Head in before 9.30am on weekends to avoid the breakfast queues.

### Casa Verde

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p490; www.lesamis.com.sg; Singapore Botanic Gardens, 1 Cluny Road; lunch \$9-18, dinner mains \$25-30, pizzas \$S21-25; ☺7.30am-9.30pm; 📍Botanic Gardens) The most accessible and family-friendly restaurant in the Botanic Gardens, 'Green House' serves up satisfying Western grub – pasta, salads, sandwiches – plus scrumptious wood-fired pizzas and a smattering of local dishes. Mercifully, the alfresco dining area comes with cooling fans for sweat-free noshing.

### Samy's Curry Restaurant

INDIAN \$

(www.samyscurry.com; Civil Service Club, Block 25, Dempsey Rd; mains \$S6-10; ☺closed Tue; 📍7, 77, 106, 123, 174) For over 30 years, the ceiling fans spun above the banana leaves in this leafy, open-walled, timber-shuttered colonial throwback. Alas the timber shutters have gone, but the food remains magnificent and the vibe one of the least pretentious in the

neighbourhood. Do not go past the fragrant fish head curry.

### Daily Scoop

ICE CREAM \$

(www.thedailyscoop.com.sg; 43 Jln Merah Saga; ice cream from \$S2; ☺11am-10pm Mon-Thu, to 10.30pm Fri & Sat, 2-10pm Sun; 📍Holland Village) Daily Scoop keeps the magic alive with over 40 creative flavours of hand-churned ice cream. Lickable options include brandied figs and honey, strawberry shortcake, and lychee martini (that's right, vodka-infused ice cream). And it doesn't end there, with milkshakes, waffles and there-goes-the-diet brownies.

### Holland Village Market & Food Centre

HAWKER \$

(Lor Mambong; dishes from \$S2; ☺10am-late; 📍Holland Village) Despite the signboard outside telling foreigners how to navigate hawker centres and describing different dishes, few venture from the pricier restaurants across the road. Break free and sample some street food classics, from barbecue seafood and Katong laksa to fried *kway teow* (rice noodles).

### KAMPONG GLAM

**TOP CHOICE** Warong Nasi

#### Pariaman

MALAY, INDONESIAN \$

(Map p486; 📍6292 2374; 738 North Bridge Rd; dishes \$S2.60-4.60; ☺7.30am-2.30pm Mon-Sat; 📍Bugis) With fans including former Malaysian prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, this threadbare nasi padang stall is the stuff of legends. Don't miss the *belado* (fried mackerel in a slow-cooked chilli, onion and vinegar sauce), delicate beef rendang or *ayam bakar* (grilled chicken with coconut sauce). Get here by 11am to avoid the hordes, and be warned... it mostly sells out by 1pm.

### Nan Hwa Chong Fish-Head Steamboat Corner

CHINESE \$\$

(Map p486; 812-816 North Bridge Rd; fish-head steamboats from \$S18; ☺4.30pm-12.30am; 📍Lavender) If you only try fish-head steamboat once, you'd do well to make it at this hawker-style legend. The fish head is brought to you in the steaming broth of a large conical-shaped pot and is then shared by everyone at the table. One is enough for three or four people, and can stretch to more with rice and side dishes. There are four types of fish to choose from – go for the fleshier red snapper (\$S20).

### Zam Zam

MALAY \$

(Map p486; 699 North Bridge Rd; dishes \$S5-8; ☺8am-11pm; 📍Bugis) Mention Zam Zam to any verified Singaporean foodie and watch their

eyes light up: here since 1908, this unadorned, tout-fronted dive serves up incredibly good *murtabak* (stuffed savoury pancake). Filled with succulent mutton, beef, chicken or venison, they're crisp and golden, yet never greasy. Servings are epic, so opt for one between two people if you're not especially hungry.

### Kilo

FUSION \$\$\$

(☎6467 3987; www.kilokitchen.com; 66 Kampong Bugis; mains \$21-38; ☎dinner Mon-Sat; 🍷Laven-der) While its location might be slightly off the radar – the second floor of an industrial riverside building – gastro geeks know exactly how to reach this 'it kid': Radiating a simple, contemporary, dinner-club vibe, it's famed for brilliant, Italo-Japanese creations like unagi and teriyaki linguine. Simplify life by taking a taxi to the restaurant.

### QS269 Food House

HAWKER \$

(Map p486; Block 269b Queen St; ☎8am-5pm Sat-Thu; 🍷Bugis) This 'food house' is actually an undercover laneway jammed with superlative street-food stalls. Work up a sweat with award-winning coconut curry noodle soup from **Ah Heng Curry Chicken Bee Hoon Mee** (dishes from \$3.50; ☎8am-5pm Sat-Thu), or join the queue for succulent roast duck at the equally revered **New Rong Liang Ge Cantonese Roast Duck Boiled Soup** (dishes from \$3; ☎9am-8pm).

### Café Le Caire

MIDDLE EASTERN \$\$\$

(Map p486; www.cafelecaire.com; 33 Arab St; dishes \$34-22; ☎10am-3.30am; 🍷🍷Bugis) Join lounging shisha-smokers and eager diners for creamy hummus, olives, felafel, pita, salads and succulent kebabs, served as mains or side-dish snacks. To soak up the vibe at its best, head in on a weekend evening.

## LITTLE INDIA

### Shish Mahal

INDIAN \$\$\$

(Map p486; www.shishmahal.com.sg; 01-20, Albert Court Hotel & Mall, 180 Albert St; mains \$7-17.90; ☎11.30am-11.30pm; 🍷🍷Little India) Although just south of Little India, Shish Mahal channels the flavours of northern India and Nepal like few others. From the delicate *momo* (chicken- or vegetable-filled dumplings with coriander) to the slightly smoky, cardamom-spiked *mahal ka makhanwala* chicken, dishes are lively and complex, but never overbearing.

### Tekka Centre

HAWKER \$

(Map p486; cnr Serangoon & Buffalo Rds; dishes \$3-5; ☎7am-11pm; 🍷🍷Little India) Queue up

for biryani, mutton curries, roti prata and *teh tarik* (pulled tea) at Little India's most famous hawker hangout. Foodies flock to the legendary **Ah-Rahman Royal Prata** (Map p486; stall 01-248; murtabak \$4-5; ☎7am-10pm), whose *murtabak* are so incredibly good that even Singapore's president is a fan. If you're undecided, go for the chicken *murtabak* with cheese.

### Bismillah Biryani

INDIAN \$

(Map p486; 50 Dunlop St; kebabs from \$4, biryani from \$6; ☎noon-8pm; 🍷Little India) Head here for Singapore's best biryani. While the mutton biryani is the speciality – and it *is* special – even that is surpassed by the mutton sheekh kebab, which is a melt-in-the-mouth revelation. Just don't leave it too late in the day to get here. Most of the best stuff is history before 8pm.

### Sankranti

INDIAN \$

(Map p486; 100 Sayed Alwi Rd; mains from \$8; ☎11.30am-4pm & 6pm-midnight; 🍷Little India) Specialising in food from the south Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, this is arguably the best of a cluster of good restaurants in and around Little India's 24-hour shopping hub, the Mustafa Centre. The extensive menu includes a number of north Indian dishes too, and has a lip-smacking choice of set-meal thalis, the pick of the bunch being the Sankranti Special, a 10-piece culinary extravaganza.

### Ananda Bhavan

INDIAN, VEGETARIAN \$

(Map p486; Block 663, 01-10 Buffalo Rd; dishes \$3-5; ☎6.30am-10.30pm; 🍷🍷Little India) This super-cheap chain restaurant is a top spot to sample south Indian breakfast staples like *idly* and *dosa* (spelt 'thosai' on the menu). It also does great-value thali, some of which are served on banana leaves. You'll find other Little India outlets at 58 Serangoon Rd and 95 Syed Alwi Rd; there's also an outlet at Changi Airport's Terminal 2.

### Moghul Sweet Shop

SWEETS \$

(Map p486; 48 Serangoon Rd; sweets from \$1; ☎11am-11pm; 🍷Little India) If you're after a sub-continental sugar rush, tiny Moghul is the place to get it. Sink your teeth into luscious *gulab jamun* (syrup-soaked fried dough balls), harder-to-find *rasmalai* (paneer cheese soaked in cardamom-infused clotted cream) and *barfi* (condensed milk and sugar slice) in flavours including pistachio, chocolate...and carrot.

## ORCHARD ROAD

Burrow into most Orchard Rd malls and you'll find great-value food courts.



INTERNATIONAL \$\$\$

(Map p490; ☎6732 2234; www.iggy.com.sg; 581 Orchard Rd, Level 3, Hilton Hotel; lunch S\$85, dinner S\$195-275; ☺lunch Mon-Fri, dinner Mon-Sat; ☎; 🍴Orchard) What is arguably Singapore's best restaurant is now housed at the Hilton Hotel after a long run at the Regent. The setting is swankier here, and the food as incredible as it always was: Japanese and European sensibilities meshed together in a tasting menu of epic proportions (eight courses for dinner!). The wine list is as impressive as it is extensive and there is a dedicated vegetarian tasting menu. Book ahead.

### Takashimaya Food Village

FOOD COURT \$

(Map p490; B2, Takashimaya Department Store, Ngee Ann City, 391 Orchard Rd; snacks from S\$1; ☺10am-9.30pm; 🍴Orchard) Roam and salivate at Takashimaya's basement food hall, a slick, sprawling sea of stalls serving up Japanese, Korean and other Asian culinary classics. Look out for *soon kueh* – steamed dumplings stuffed with bamboo shoots, bangkwang (a root vegetable), dried mushroom, carrot and dried prawn – and do *not* pass on a fragrant bowl of noodles from the Tsurukoshi stand.

### Food Republic

FOOD COURT \$

(Map p490; Level 4, Wisma Atria Shopping Centre, 435 Orchard Rd; dishes from S\$3; ☺8am-10pm Mon-Thu, to 11pm Fri-Sun; 🍴Orchard) It's survival of the quickest when it comes to grabbing a table at peak times, but the mix of hawker classics, Thai, Japanese and Indian grub is well worth it. Stake a seat before joining the longest queues. Roving 'aunties' push around trolleys filled with drinks and dim sum, while the Waan Waan Thai stall does a seriously fine chilli-laced mango salad.

### Din Tai Fung

TAIWANESE \$

(Map p490; www.dintai fung.com.sg; B1-03/06, Paragon Shopping Centre, 290 Orchard Rd; buns from S\$3.80, dumplings from S\$6.80; 🍴Orchard) This is one of three Din Tai Fung outlets on Orchard Rd; you'll find the other two inside the Wisma Atria and 313 Somerset shopping malls. The chain is famous for its exquisite *xiao long bao* (soup dumplings),

### Bombay Woodlands

INDIAN, VEGETARIAN \$\$\$

(Map p490; B1-01/02, Tanglin Shopping Centre, 19 Tanglin Rd; mains from S\$9; ☺10am-3pm & 6-10pm

Mon-Fri, 10am-10pm Sat & Sun; ☎; 🍴Orchard) You'll find Bombay Woodlands – still one of the hidden gems of the Orchard area – below street level in the Tanglin Shopping Centre. The food is magnificent and cheap for this end of town: opt for the bottomless lunchtime buffet or order à la carte for south Indian classics like *idly* (spongy, fermented rice cake) or *dosa* (paper-thin lentil-flour pancake), washed down with a cooling *lassi* (icy yoghurt drink).

### Wasabi Tei

JAPANESE \$\$\$

(Map p490; 05-70 Far East Plaza, 14 Scotts Rd; meals S\$10-30; ☺closed Sun; 🍴Orchard) Channelling 1972 with its Laminex countertop and Brady Bunch wall panels, this pocked-sized sushi joint feels like a secret hideout. Stake a spot at the counter and watch the Chinese chef prove that you don't have to be Japanese to make raw fish sing with flavour. Choose carefully as post-order amendments are a no no.

### Killiney Kopitiam

COFFEE SHOP \$

(Map p490; 67 Killiney Rd; mains S\$4-6; ☺6am-11pm Mon & Wed-Sat, to 9pm Tue & Sun; 🍴Somerset) This old school coffee joint, decked out in white wall tiles, fluorescent lights and endearingly lame laminated jokes, is a solid spot to tuck into a Singaporean breakfast of toast, soft-boiled eggs and sucker-punch coffee. Post-breakfast, devour 'just-like-aunties' chicken curry, *laksa* and *nasi lemak* (coconut rice, dried anchovies and spices wrapped in banana leaf), topped off with a sweet-dumpling dessert.

### Nagomi

JAPANESE \$\$\$

(Map p490; ☎6732 4300; www.nagomirestaurant.com.sg; 02-22 Cuppage Plaza, 5 Keok Rd; meals S\$40-80; ☺dinner Mon-Sat; 🍴Somerset) Plush, elegant Nagomi pairs sublime sakes with obscenely fresh, delicate Japanese nosh. Ingredients are flown in from Japan four times a week, and meals are prepared *omakase*, meaning that menus are ditched for the chef's seasonal specialties. Prepare to be transported.

### Wild Honey

CAFE \$\$\$

(Map p490; www.wildhoney.com.sg; Lvl 3, Scotts Sq, 6 Scotts Rd; breakfast S\$12-24; ☺9am-9pm; ☎; 🍴Orchard) Located in the fashion-conscious Scotts Square shopping centre, trendy Wild Honey peddles scrumptious, all-day breakfast from around the world, from the tofu-laced (Californian) to the shaksouka-spiced (Tunisian). Other options include fresh muffins and cakes, gourmet sandwiches and

rich roasted coffee. The smaller, original branch is in the Mandarin Gallery shopping centre on nearby Orchard Rd.

## SENTOSA ISLAND



SEAFOOD \$\$\$

(Map p499; ☎6371 1425; www.theciff.sg; Sentosa Resort, 2 Bukit Manis Rd; mains \$S\$56-125; ☺dinner) Perched high above Palawan Beach (although tree cover obscures some of the view), chi-chi Cliff serves up sublime seafood to a soundtrack of jazz, crickets and rustling leaves. Expect scallops to be paired with apples, tartare with watermelon, and barramundi with prosciutto 'floss'. If you're indecisive, opt for the four-course set menu (\$S\$130).

## Malaysian Food Street

HAWKER \$

(Map p499; www.rwsentosa.com; Resorts World; dishes from \$S\$4; ☺11am-10pm) With its faux Malaysian streetscape, this indoor hawker centre does feel a bit Disney. Thankfully, there's nothing fake about the food itself, cooked by some of Malaysia's best hawker vendors. Taste-test Singapore's northern neighbour with classics like *char koay teow* (stir-fried flat rice noodles with chilli, belachan, prawns and cockles) and *yong tau foo* (consomme with fried tofu, bitter melon and vegetables).

## Coastes

INTERNATIONAL \$\$

(Map p499; www.coastes.com; Siloso Beach; sandwiches & burgers \$S\$16-20; ☺10am-10pm Mon-Thu, 11am-1am Fri & Sat, 9am-10pm Sun) Coastes is the best of the Sentosa Beach eateries, serving up excellent pizzas, pasta and curries to a relaxed crowd. Grab a rustic table under the pergola, or look louche on the sun loungers. It's not exclusively for the hip, tanned and beautiful, as the thumping music suggests.



## Drinking

Singapore's bar scene is a kicking mix of designer rooftop lounges and cocktail dens, Euro-centric wine bars, microbreweries and hipster-approved coffee roasters. Popular drinking hubs include Boat Quay and Clarke Quay, Chinatown's trendy Club St, Ann Siang Hill and Duxton Hill precincts, sheesha-scented Kampong Glam, heritage-listed Emerald Hill Rd, and ex-pat hangouts Dempsey Hill and Holland Village.

Despite Singapore's high-priced drinks (expect to pay \$S\$10 to \$S\$18 for a beer in most city bars), there are ways to sip and save. Hit the bars early to cash in on happy hours,

typically stretching from 5pm to 8pm and offering two-for-one drinks. On Wednesday or Thursday nights, some bars offer cheap (sometimes free) drinks for women – a common practice in Singapore, without the stench of sleaze. If you really need to scrimp and don't mind plastic tables and fluoro lights, bottles of Tiger will set you back \$S\$6 at hawker centres and coffee shops.

Unless otherwise stated, bars open around 5pm until at least midnight Sunday to Thursday, and through to 2am or 3am on Friday and Saturday.

## COLONIAL DISTRICT

### New Asia

BAR

(Map p478; Swissôtel The Stamford, 2 Stamford Rd; ☺3pm-1am Sun-Tue, to 2am Wed & Thu, to 3am Fri & Sat; ☑City Hall) Martinis demand dizzying skyline views and few deliver like this sleek bar-club hybrid, perched 71 floors above street level. Style up and head in early to watch the sun sink, then strike a pose on the dance floor. The \$S\$25 cover charge on Friday and Saturday includes one drink... but with views like these, who's counting?

### Loof

BAR

(Map p478; www.loof.com.sg; 03-07 Odeon Towers Building, 331 North Bridge Rd; ☑City Hall) Rooftop Loof cheekily gets its name from the Singlish mangling of the word 'roof'. Up here, City Hall district views are paired with smooth tunes, retro-Asian bar snacks, and regionally inspired libations – think Ho Chi Mint (pear juice, vodka, mint and cucumber) and Java Ginger Crush (ginger beer, fresh ginger and Canton ginger liqueur).

### Raffles Hotel

BAR

(Map p478; www.affles.com.sg; 1 Beach Rd; ☑City Hall) Yup, it's a cliché, but still, few visit Singapore without at least stopping off for drinks at one of the bars in the famous Raffles Hotel. Ditch the **Long Bar** (☺11-12.30am Sun-Thu, 11-1.30am-1am Fri & Sat) and its overpriced Singapore Slings and chill out Raj-style at the much more appealing **Bar & Billiard Room** (☎6412 1816; ☺11am-midnight Tue-Sat). Alternatively, rehydrate below rattling palms at the **Raffles Courtyard bar** (☺11am-10.30pm).

### Paulaner Bräuhaus

BREWERY

(Map p478; www.paulaner.com.sg; 01-01 Times Square, Millenia Walk, 9 Raffles Blvd; ☺noon-1am Sun-Thu, to 2am Fri & Sat; ☑City Hall, Promenade) Join business types for brothy tankards of Munich lager, Munich dark brews and

platters of sausage and cheese 'knacker' at this three-level, wood-and-brass microbrewery. Beers are served in 300mL, 500mL and 1L steins, with seasonal brews like Salvator Beer, Mailbock Beer and Oktoberfest Beer adding to the temptation.

## THE QUAYS

### Lantern Bar

BAR

(Map p478; ☎6597 5299; Fullerton Bay Hotel, 80 Collyer Quay; ☎8am-1am Sun-Thu, 8am-2am Fri & Sat; 📍Raffles Place) Fifth-floor Lantern may be height challenged, but it has no shortage of X-factor. Surrounding a glittering mosaic pool, it's a seductive melange of frangipani trees, skyscraper views, DJ-spun house and well-mixed libations. Call three days ahead if you fancy your own cabana.

### Brewerkz

BREWERY

(Map p478; www.brewerkz.com; 01-05 Riverside Point Centre, 30 Merchant Rd; ☎noon-midnight Sun-Thu, noon-1am Fri & Sat; 📍Clarke Quay) The first among Singapore's crop of microbreweries and still the biggest and arguably the best. The beers are uniformly superb, from the hugely popular India Pale Ale to the quirkier seasonal fruit beers, with a solid choice of American comfort grub to soak it all up. Best (or worst) of all, the earlier you arrive, the cheaper the drinks.

### Penny Black

PUB

(Map p478; www.pennyblack.com.sg; 26/27 Boat Quay; ☎11.30am-1am Mon-Thu, 11.30am-2am Fri & Sat, 11.30am-midnight Sun; 📍Raffles Place) Fitted out like a Victorian London pub (without the tuberculosis and dodgy gin), the Penny Black's interior was actually built in London and shipped to Singapore, so it has some claim to authenticity. Specialises in hard-to-find English ales for the swaths of expat Brits who work in the area. The upstairs bar is especially inviting.

### Harry's

BAR

(Map p478; www.harrys.com.sg; 28 Boat Quay; ☎11.30am-1am Sun-Thu, 11.30am-2am Fri & Sat; 📍Raffles Place) The original and best of the 31 Harry's branches, this classic city-slicker hangout gained moderate infamy as the haunt of Barings-buster Nick Leeson. Loosen your tie and toast to happy hour (till 8pm), the occasional live band, or the free pool table.

### Molly Malone's

IRISH PUB

(Map p478; www.molly-malone.com; 56 Circular Rd; ☎11am-midnight Mon & Sun, 11am-2am Tue-Sat; 📍Raffles Place) Well-travelled drinkers will

have seen the mock-Irish interior and the genuine Irish stew and fish-and-chip menu a hundred times before, but that doesn't make it any less cosy or welcoming. It's just behind Boat Quay on Circular Rd. Make it a pint or three of Guinness, please.

## Brussels Sprouts Belgian

### Beer & Mussels

BEER HALL

(Map p478; www.brusselssprouts.com.sg; 01-12 Robertson Quay, 80 Mohamed Sultan Rd; ☎5pm-midnight Mon-Thu, 5pm-1am Fri, noon-1am Sat, noon-midnight Sun; 📍Clarke Quay) This cute and popular restaurant/bar lays the Belgian theme on heavily with mussels, Trappist ales galore and Tintin murals on the wall (the whole gang's there, down to Thomson and Thompson). Choose between the hundred-plus beers on the menu.

## Next Page

BAR

(Map p478; ☎6235 6967; 17 Mohamed Sultan Rd; ☎3pm-3am; 📍Fort Canning) This is where Hunter S Thompson would have hung out if he'd been a journo in Singapore. Dark timber bar, red lanterns, exposed brickwork, booths, pool table, Carlsberg on tap and quirky bartenders – sit down and write the next page of your novel.

## Cuba Libre

BAR

(Map p478; www.cubalibre.com.sg; 3B River Valley Rd, Block B, 01-03 Clarke Quay; ☎6pm-2am Sun-Thu, 6pm-3am Fri & Sat; 📍Clarke Quay) The live Cuban music (Tuesday to Sunday) surges with energy and will compel even the most wooden of legs to start moving. If you can resist the siren of salsa, nurse a Caipirinha and watch students shake their *culo* on the dance floor. Pop tarts will appreciate Monday night's Top 40 tunes.

## CHINATOWN & THE CBD

### 1 Altitude

BAR

(Map p482; www.1-altitude.com; Lvl 63, 1 Raffles Place; admission S\$25 (S\$30 after 9pm), incl one drink; 📍Raffles Place) Fancy sipping cocktails perched on a cloud? This is the next best thing. Occupying the 63rd floor of the soaring 1 Raffles Place skyscraper, this bar is a seductive combo of smooth lounge tunes, swaying palms and the twinkling sprawl of Singapore and beyond. Dress up (no shorts or flip-flops) and don't forget your camera.

## Level 33

BREWERY

(www.level33.com.sg; Level 33, Marina Bay Financial Tower 1, 8 Marina Blvd; ☎noon-midnight Sun-Thu, noon-2am Fri & Sat; 📍Raffles Place) Brews with

a view is what you get at the world's highest 'urban craft-brewery'. While the food doesn't quite match the loftiness of its locale, the house-brewed blonde lager, pale ale, porter and stout go down as smoothly as the view over Marina Bay.

### La Terrazza

BAR

(Map p482; ☎6221 1694; www.screeningroom.com.sg; Level 4, 12 Ann Siang Rd; ☑Chinatown) The Chinatown-meets-CBD panorama from this very popular rooftop bar, part of the Screening Room film complex (p531), are superb. Hunt down a comfy couch, kick off your shoes and have a shouting-into-each-other's ears conversation over nostalgic 80s and 90s tunes. To reserve a bar table, call or email three days ahead.

### Tantric Bar

GAY

(Map p482; 78 Neil Rd; ☎8pm-3am Sun-Fri, 8pm-4am Sat; ☑Outram Park, Chinatown) Complete with a palm-fringed courtyard, Tantric is Singapore's hottest gay drinking hole. Especially heaving on Friday and Saturday nights, it's a hit with preened locals and eager expats, who schmooze and cruise to Gaga, Kylie and K-pop. Lushes shouldn't miss Wednesday nights, where S\$20 gets you two martinis.

### Beaujolais Wine Bar

WINE BAR

(Map p482; 1 Ann Siang Hill; ☎noon-1am; ☑Chinatown) A tiny, raffish bar perched on the corner of two trendy, bar-filled streets, Beaujolais is *très bon* for people-watching sessions. While we love the upstairs lounge; head in early for a terrace table and toast to the tropics over a glass of well-priced wine.

### Plain

CAFE

(Map p482; www.theplain.com.sg; 50 Craig Rd; ☎730am-730pm; ☑Tanjong Pagar) A hipster-approved mix of stark interiors, neatly piled design magazines and a Scandi-style communal table, the Plain gets it right with Australian Genovese coffee, decent all-day breakfasts and sweet treats like lemon and lime tarts. Service is friendly and the vibe refreshingly relaxed.

### Backstage Bar

GAY

(Map p482; www.backstagebar.moonfruit.com; 13A Trengganu St; ☑Chinatown) While most of the look-at-me pretty boys head to Tantric Bar and Taboo (p532), less pretentious types gravitate here. Sit on the balcony to chat and flirt with local lads, or just sit back and watch the Chinatown action below. Entrance on Temple St.

## KAMPONG GLAM & LITTLE INDIA

### Maison Ikkoku

CAFE, COCKTAIL BAR

(Map p486; www.maison-ikkoku.net; 20 Kandahar St; ☎cafe 9am-9pm Mon-Thu, to 11pm Fri & Sat, to 7pm Sun, bar 6pm-late Mon-Sat; ☑; ☑Bugis) Pimped with Chesterfield banquettes and suspended wooden dressers, Maison Ikkoku keeps coffee snobs satisfied with speciality brewing methods like syphon and pourover, as well as old-school espresso. Edibles include decent salads and cakes – and *musubi*, a sushi-like Hawaiian snack topped with seasoned spam. Two floors up is the slinky cocktail bar, complete with alfresco terrace.

### Zsofi Tapas Bar

BAR

(Map p486; www.tapasbar.com.sg; 68 Dunlop St; ☑Little India) It's all about the rooftop here, a wonderful and highly unusual space for this part of town, and big enough to (nearly) always find a seat on. Drinks are anything but cheap – expect to pay at least S\$12 for a beer – but every one of them comes with free tapas, which goes some way to softening the blow when you get the bill.

### Going Om

CAFE, BAR

(Map p486; www.going-om.com; 63 Haji Lane; ☎closed Tue; ☑Bugis) Part cafe, part chill-out space. The seating area downstairs offers shisha, cocktails, coffees, teas and even 'chakra drinks' of seven colours (one for each chakra). Upstairs has a flexible space for yoga, tarot-card readings and group meditation. There's a house magician on Thursday nights, and live music gigs on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays after 8.30pm.

## ORCHARD ROAD

### Que Pasa

WINE BAR

(Map p490; 7 Emerald Hill Rd; ☑Somerset) This wine bar channels old España with its tin lamps, strung chilli lights and *El País* wallpaper. It also boasts an astute wine list – the perfect match for succulent bites like anchovy bread. Que Pasa's location on buzzing, heritage-handsome Emerald Hill Rd is nothing short of *fabuloso*.

### KPO

BAR

(Map p490; www.imaginations.com.sg; 1 Killiney Rd; ☎3pm-1am Mon-Thu, 3pm-2am Fri & Sat; ☑Somerset) Stamps, cocktails and Lamborghinis: welcome to one of Singapore's quirkiest cocktail spots. Housed in a renovated post-master's house, trendy KPO is as well known for its philatelic pedigree as it is for the luxury wheels of its see-and-be-seen evening



## TEA CULTURE

For soothing cultural enlightenment, slip into one of Chinatown's atmospheric teahouses. Start at **Yixing Yuan Teahouse** (Map p482; [www.yixingyuan-teahouse.com](http://www.yixingyuan-teahouse.com); 30/32 Tanjong Pagar Rd; 45min demonstration S\$20; ☎10am-9pm Mon-Sat, 10am-7pm Sun; ☑Tanjong Pagar), where reformed corporate banker Vincent Low explains everything you need to know about sampling different types of tea. Demonstrations with tastings last around 45 minutes to two hours (S\$20 to S\$40).

Once you know your green tea from your oolong, duck around the corner to **Tea Chapter** (Map p482; [www.tea-chapter.com.sg](http://www.tea-chapter.com.sg); 9-11 Neil Rd; tea from \$5; ☎11am-10.30pm Sun-Thu, 11am-11pm Fri & Sat; ☑Chinatown), where Queen Elizabeth dropped by for a cuppa in 1989. If you don't know the tea-making drill, the server will give you a brief demonstration. Downstairs, all manner of tea paraphernalia are precariously balanced on display shelves and can be purchased.

If you're on Orchard Rd, drop into upmarket tea purveyor **TWG Tea** (Map p490; [www.twgtea.com](http://www.twgtea.com); 02-20 ION Orchard, 2 Orchard Rd; ☎10am-10pm; ☑Orchard), which peddles over 800 varieties of tea from around the world, including Rolls Royce varieties like Da Hong Pao from Fujian. Savour the flavour with a few tea-infused macaroons (the bain de roses is divine). You'll find other outlets at Ngee Ann City's Takashimaya (p535) and the Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands (p533) mall.

clientele. Style up, order a cocktail, and scan the gorgeous rooftop terrace for your prospective ride home.

### Dubliners

IRISH PUB

(Map p490; [www.dublinerssingapore.com](http://www.dublinerssingapore.com); 165 Penang Rd; ☎11.30am-1am Sun-Thu, to 2am Fri & Sat; ☑Somerset) Lousy Irish pubs filled with bellowing, beer-bellied execs are omnipresent in Singapore. Thankfully, this colonial beauty isn't one of them. Nurse your Guinness in the cosy gloom inside, or embrace the tropics on the alfresco verandah. The pub grub is well-priced and tasty, and the service worth a little toast.

### DEMPSEY ROAD & HOLLAND VILLAGE



#### Da Paolo Bistro Bar

BAR, RESTAURANT

([www.dapaolo.com.sg](http://www.dapaolo.com.sg); 3 Rochester Park; ☎bar 5.30-11.30pm Mon-Fri, 2-11.30pm Sat & Sun, restaurant lunch & dinner daily; ☎74, 91, 92, 95, 191, 196, 198, 200, ☑Buona Vista) Looking straight off the pages of *Vogue Living*, this tropical-chic gem sits on a lush, secluded street 2km southwest of Holland Village. Settle in on the patio and taste test the speciality tea-based cocktails – we love the Oo Lá Lá (oolong ginseng tea-infused gin, Campari, sweet Vermouth and lemon juice). If you can't pull yourself away, Italian bites will sustain you throughout the evening.

### Tippling Club

COCKTAIL BAR

([www.tipplingclub.com](http://www.tipplingclub.com); 8D Dempsey Rd; ☎6pm-late Mon-Fri, noon-3pm & 6pm-late Sat; ☎7, 77, 106, 123, 174) Forest-fringed Tippling Club takes

mixology to new heights. Savour the brilliance in cocktails like 'Wake Me Up, F\*ck Me Up' (VSOP cognac, fresh espresso and mole bitters), or 'Smoky Old Bastard' (a large whisky served in a glass tube filled with smoke made from dried orange powder and flavoured with maple syrup and banana). Not cheap (cocktails from S\$21), but worth it.

### RedDot Brewhouse

BREWERY

([www.reddotbrewhouse.com.sg](http://www.reddotbrewhouse.com.sg); 25A Dempsey Rd; ☎noon-midnight Mon-Thu, noon-2am Fri & Sat, 10am-midnight Sun; ☎7, 77, 106, 123, 174) This microbrewery, tucked away in a quiet part of Dempsey Hill, is Valhalla for beer fiends. Seven brews on tap include a green pilsner, its alien tinge coming from the spirulina used in the brewing process. Food options are generally mediocre, so kick back on the deck and focus on the liquid gold.

### Wala Wala Café Bar

BAR

([www.imaginations.com.sg](http://www.imaginations.com.sg); 31 Lorong Mambong; ☎4pm-1am Mon-Thu, 4pm-2am Fri, 3pm-2am Fri, 3pm-1am Sat; ☑Holland Village) Large, raucous and friendly, Wala Wala has been a long-standing favourite with the young expat crowd for its breezy vibe and its live-music bar upstairs. Downstairs it pulls in football fans with its large sports screens. Beers start at \$10, a relative bargain in this part of town.

### SENTOSA ISLAND

#### Azzura Beach Club

BAR

(Map p499; ☎6270 8003; [www.azzura.sg](http://www.azzura.sg); 46 Siloso Beach Walk; ☎10am-10pm Mon-Thu, to 2am Fri-Sun)

Body beautifuls head here to nibble, sip and flirt over tasting plates and cooling cocktails. Flaunt it in the Harem-inspired lounge/club or catch a breeze under sinuous palms.

### Tanjong Beach Club

BAR

(Map p499; [www.tanjongbeachclub.com](http://www.tanjongbeachclub.com); Tanjong Beach; ☎11am-11pm Tue-Thu, 10am-11pm Fri & Sat) Don't fancy swimming at the beach? Cool down in the infinity pool at this stylish beach bar/restaurant. Aside from Sundays, this place is remarkably quiet, making it an ideal getaway from the madding Sentosa crowds.

### Wave House

BAR

(Map p499; [wavehousesentosa.com](http://wavehousesentosa.com); Siloso Beach; ☎10am-11pm) Surfer-friendly beach bar with its own ordinary pool plus two 'flowriders': wave pools that you can pay to surf in.

## EAST COAST

### 1-TwentySix

BAR

(Map p492; [www.1-twentysix.com](http://www.1-twentysix.com); 902 East Coast Parkway; ☎; ☑401) Palms, gurgling fountains and cocktails with names like 7 Desirable Sins await at this chic, beachside bar. Sip on old and new world vino, and line your stomach with decadent (and admittedly pricey) nibbles like French fries with truffle oil. For the best value, head in during happy hour (5pm to 8pm).



## Entertainment

Dance, theatre, Chinese opera, live rock, symphony concerts, A-list DJs: Singapore gives you no excuse for an early night. While the city's performing arts hub is Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay, many visiting Broadway musicals hit the stage at Marina Bay Sands. Clubs, which generally close at 3am and are strictly drug-free, often feature top local and visiting DJs, while Singapore's small but kicking local music scene counters the dominance of cover bands. Tickets for most events are available through **Sistic** (☎6348 5555; [www.sistic.com.sg](http://www.sistic.com.sg)). Check the website for the nearest outlets. The *Straits Times*, *I-S Magazine* and *Time Out* have listings for movies, theatre and music. For nightlife, pick up the free street mags *I-S Magazine* and *Juice* at cafes, hotels and music stores.

## Chinese Opera

### Chinese Theatre Circle

CHINESE OPERA

(Map p482; ☎6323 4862; 5 Smith St; ☑Chinatown) Every Friday and Saturday at 8pm, this not-for-profit opera group delivers a brief talk (in English; S\$20) on Chinese opera, followed

by a 45-minute performance from an opera classic. Lychee tea and tea cakes are included in the price and bookings are recommended. For S\$35, turn up at 7pm and you can enjoy a Chinese meal beforehand. Search for Chinese Theatre Circle on Facebook.

## Cinema

Singaporeans love to watch movies, and at around S\$10 per ticket, it's great value. Multiplex cinemas abound, and most are clustered around the city area, on or near Orchard Rd. Non-English films are subtitled. Dress warmly - Singaporean cinemas are notoriously chilly.

### Golden Village Gold Class

CINEMA

([www.gv.com.sg](http://www.gv.com.sg)) With locations at **VivoCity** (Map p499; [www.vivocity.com.sg](http://www.vivocity.com.sg); 1 HarbourFront Walk; ☑HarbourFront), **112 Katong** (Map p492; 112 East Coast Road; ☑10, 10E, 14, 14E, 16, 32, 40), and **Great World City** ([www.greatworldcity.com.sg](http://www.greatworldcity.com.sg); 1 Kim Seng Promenade; ☑16, 32, 54, 139, 195, 75, 970, ☑free shuttle from City Hall MRT), these swanky cinemas feature plush carpeting and single and double reclining seats complete with footrests, table service and a reasonable menu. On the second and fourth Wednesday evening of every month, Golden Village at Great World City showcases independent Asian cinema curated by Sinema ([www.sinema.sg](http://www.sinema.sg)).

### Screening Room

CINEMA

(Map p482; [www.screeningroom.com.sg](http://www.screeningroom.com.sg); 12 Ann Siang Rd; ☑Chinatown) Get your ticket, order some food and drinks and sink into a comfy sofa to watch a film projected onto the pull-down screen. After the performance, head upstairs to the rooftop bar for some post-show drinks with a view.

### Rex Cinemas

CINEMA

(Map p486; 2 Mackenzie Rd; ☑Little India) Where can you catch the Bollywood blockbusters advertised all over Little India? Why at the Rex, of course. This beautifully renovated historic three-screen theatre shows films from around the subcontinent, most subtitled in English.

## Clubs

Most clubs have cover charges of around S\$15 to S\$40, often including at least one drink; women usually pay less (or even nothing!).

### Zouk

CLUB

([www.zoukclub.com](http://www.zoukclub.com); 17 Jiak Kim St; ☎Zouk 10pm-late Wed, Fri & Sat, Phuture & Velvet Underground

9pm-late Wed, Fri & Sat, Wine Bar 6pm-2am Tue, to 3am Wed & Thu, to 4am Fri & Sat) Singapore's hottest club is well known for its prolific DJs, massive dance floor and five bars. While weekends are reserved for fresh dance, hip-hop and electro, Wednesdays are a retro affair of 70s, 80s and 90s tunes. The complex is also home to alfresco Zouk Wine Bar, avant-garde Phuture, and boudoir-inspired Velvet Underground, hung with Andy Warhol and Keith Haring originals. Take a taxi.

### Home Club

CLUB

(Map p478; www.homeclub.com.sg; B1-1/06 The Riverwalk, 20 Upper Circular Rd; ☎7pm-3am Tue-Fri, 7pm-4am Sat; ☑Clarke Quay) Home Club enjoys serious cred with music buffs. The resident nights kick some serious 'A' with playlists spanning house, electro, and retro, to drum and bass and psy-trance. The venue is also known for its credible live pop and rock acts, and its Tuesday comedy night.

### Butter Factory

CLUB

(Map p478; www.thebutterfactory.com; 02-02 One Fullerton, 1 Fullerton Rd; ☎10pm-4am Wed, Fri & Sat; ☑Clarke Quay) At 8000 sq ft, Butter Factory is as huge as it is slick. Street art on the walls of Bump, the hip hop, rhythm and blues room, betrays its young and overdressed crowd. Fash is its chilled-out 'art' bar, and walls are plastered with colourful pop art reminiscent of underground comics (yes, the ones you hid from mum).

### Taboo

GAY

(Map p482; www.taboo.sg; 65/67 Neil Rd; ☎8pm-2am Wed & Thu, 10pm-3am Fri, 10pm-4am Sat; ☑Outram Park, Chinatown) After drinks at Tantric, cross the street and hit the dance floor at what remains the hottest gay dance club on the scene. Expect the requisite line-up of shirtless gyrators, dance-happy straight women and regular racy themed nights.

### St James Power Station

CLUB, LIVE MUSIC

(Map p499; www.stjamespowerstation.com; 3 Sentosa Gateway; ☑HarbourFront) This reformed 1920s coal-fired power station boasts a booty of interconnected venues, including live rock/pop club **Boiler Room** (Map p499; ☎6pm-3am Mon-Thu, 6pm-4am Fri & Sat) and Latin club **Movida** (Map p499; ☎8pm-3am Tue-Thu, 8pm-5am Fri & Sat, 6pm-3am Sun). All venues are interconnected and included in the one cover charge (men S\$20 Fridays and Saturdays, women free daily). Some bars have no cover charge at all. Wednesday's Ladies Night offers women a room-spinning five free drinks from 11pm.

## Live Music

### CLASSICAL

#### Singapore Symphony Orchestra

CLASSICAL MUSIC

(Map p478; ☎6348 5555; www.sso.org.sg; ☑Esplanade) The 1800-seater state-of-the-art concert hall at the Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay is home to this respected orchestra. It plays frequently each month; check the website for details and book in advance. Student and senior (55-plus) discounts are available; kids under six years old are unceremoniously banned.

#### Singapore Chinese Orchestra

CLASSICAL MUSIC

(Map p482; ☎6557 4034; www.sco.com.sg; Singapore Conference Hall, 7 Shenton Way; ☑Tanjong Pagar) The orchestra performs classical Chinese concerts throughout the year, with traditional instruments including the *liuqin*, *ruan* and *sanxian*, and occasionally collaborates with Japanese, jazz and Malay musicians.

### ROCK

#### Crazy Elephant

LIVE MUSIC, BLUES

(Map p478; www.crazyelephant.com; 01-03/04, Clarke Quay; ☑Clarke Quay) If the remodelled Clarke Quay is a collection of eager-faced college kids, then this beery, blokey, graffiti-strewn rock dive is the crusty old-timer shaking his head. One of Singapore's oldest, trustiest live-music venues, it's the place to ditch all that electronic nonsense and surrender yourself to some serious, loud, grunting rock and blues.

#### Prince of Wales

LIVE MUSIC

(Map p486; ☎6299 0130; www.pow.com.sg; 101 Dunlop St; ☑Little India) This Aussie-hewn pub has backpacker accommodation upstairs. Rub shoulders with resident surfy beer-boffins effusing over acoustic rock, indie and folk. Entry is free and music is from 7.30pm most nights, though it's a good idea to check the website for details.

### Tab

LIVE MUSIC

(Map p490; www.tab.com.sg; 442 Orchard Rd, 02-29 Orchard Hotel; ☎9pm-5am Sun-Tue, 7pm-5am Wed & Thu, 7pm-6am Fri & Sat; ☑Orchard) Head in before 10.30pm on Wednesday, Friday or Saturday to see local bands belt out their stuff, or on any night after that for Asian bands, dancers and DJs.

### JAZZ & BLUES

#### BluJaz Cafe

PUB

(Map p486; www.blujaz.net; 11 Bali Ln; ☎noon-1am Mon-Thu, noon-2am Fri, 4pm-2am Sat; ☎☑Bugis)

Brightly coloured and eccentrically decorated, this boho hangout keeps punters happy with its well-priced beers (from S\$6), live jazz or blues on Friday and Saturday (and the first Monday of the month), and funky upstairs lounge. Best seats in the house, however, line the side alley linking Bali and Haji Lanes.

## Spectator Sports

### Singapore Turf Club

HORSE RACING

(www.turfclub.com.sg; 1 Turf Club Ave; 🚗Kranji) Watch Singaporeans get hot under the collar as their four-legged bets roar to the finish line. Seats range from lower grandstand (S\$3-4) up to the Gold Card Room (S\$15). Dress code is collared shirt and pants for men; closed shoes for women. Betting is government controlled; check the website for race schedules (usually Friday nights and all day on weekends). Kranji MRT station is right outside.

## Theatre & Dance

### Singapore Repertory Theatre

THEATRE

(Map p478; ☎6733 8166; www.srt.com.sg; DBS Arts Centre, 20 Merbau Rd; 🚗Clarke Quay) The bigwig of the Singapore theatre scene has a repertoire spanning Shakespeare, modern Western classics and contemporary works from Singapore, Asia-Pacific and beyond. Recent coups include a season of Sam Mendes' *Richard III* starring Kevin Spacey. Although based at the DBS Arts Centre, productions are also held at Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay and Fort Canning Park.

### Singapore Dance Theatre

DANCE

(Map p478; ☎6338 0611; www.singaporedance.com; 2nd fl, Fort Canning Centre, Cox Tce; 🚗Dhoby Ghaut) Traditional ballet and contemporary works is what you'll get from Singapore's world-class dance company. The group's Ballet under the Stars season at Fort Canning Park is justifiably popular, and their regular, on-site ballet classes are just the ticket for budding Fonteyns and Nureyevs.



## Shopping

Bangkok and Hong Kong might upstage it on the bargain front, but when it comes to choice, few cities match Singapore. Mall-heavy, chain-centric **Orchard Rd** is Singapore's retail queen, though it's only one of several retail hubs. For computers and electronics, hit specialist malls such as Funan DigitaLife Mall, Sim Lim Square and Mustafa Centre. Good places for antiques

include Tanglin Shopping Centre (p536) **Dempsey Hill**, and **Chinatown**. For fabrics and textiles, scour **Little India** and **Kampong Glam**. Kampong Glam is also famous for its perfume traders, as well as for the booty of hip, independent fashion boutiques on **Haji Lane**.

## COLONIAL DISTRICT, THE QUAYS & MARINA BAY

### Funan DigitaLife Mall

ELECTRONICS

(Map p478; www.funan.com.sg; 109 North Bridge Rd; 🚗City Hall) Tech mall of choice for people who prefer to pay a bit more for branded products and cast-iron guarantees, rather than brave the aisles of Sim Lim Square. **Challenger Superstore** (www.challenger.com.sg; ☎10am-10pm) is the best one-stop shop for all IT desires. For cameras, visit family-run **John 3:16** (Map p478; ☎12.30-9.30pm Mon-Sat).

### Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands

MALL

(Map p478; www.marinabaysands.com; 10 Bayfront Ave; 🚗Bayfront, Marina Bay, Promenade) You'll find all the 'It' brands at this giant, glossy mall, including runway royalty Prada and Miu Miu. Cued-up fashionistas shop at unisex **Society of Black Sheep** (Map p478; www.societyofblacksheep.com), whose adventurous labels include Sydney's cyber punk-inspired Injury, Singapore's geometric Yumumu, as well as artisan jewellery from local talent Carrie K. You'll also find an ice-free skating rink, celebrity nosh spots, and a floating Louis Vuitton store.

### Peninsula Plaza

MALL

(Map p478; 111 North Bridge Rd; 🚗City Hall) The shopping centre that props up the Peninsula Excelsior Hotel has seen better days, but it's one of the city's best hunting grounds for sporting goods and second-hand camera gear. Shutter fiends shouldn't miss **Cathay Photo** (Map p478; www.cathayphoto.com.sg; ☎10am-7pm Mon-Sat), Singapore's best-stocked (though not necessarily cheapest) camera store.

### Raffles City

MALL

(Map p478; www.rafflescity.com.sg; 252 North Bridge Rd; 🚗City Hall) One of Singapore's best shopping malls, buzzing Raffles' includes a three-level branch of the excellent Robinsons department store, global fashion brands such as Topshop, agnès b, Kate Spade, a good selection of children's clothes and toys, the Ode to Art gallery, as well as a satisfying booty of food court stalls and restaurants for flagging shopaholics.



## TOP SHOPPING TIPS

- » Prices are usually fixed except at markets and in tourist areas; don't start bargaining if you have no interest in purchasing.
- » Shop around when buying electronics like computers, tablets and cameras. Re-searching prices means less chance of getting overcharged.
- » Especially in smaller shops, ensure international guarantees are filled out correctly, including the shop's name and the item's serial number. When buying antiques, ask for a certificate of antiquity, required by many countries to avoid paying customs duty.
- » If buying a Bluray, DVD player or a gaming system, check that it will play your home country's discs. Also, check the voltage and cycle of electrical goods. Most shops will attach the correct plug for your country if you ask.
- » Although the annual **Great Singapore Sale** ([www.greatsingaporeale.com.sg](http://www.greatsingaporeale.com.sg)) spans late May to late July, the best bargains are had during the first week.
- » In the unlikely case you're ripped off or taken for a ride, contact the Singapore Tourism Board (p541) or the **Small Claims Tribunal** (☎6435 5994; [www.smallclaims.gov.sg](http://www.smallclaims.gov.sg); Subordinate Courts, 1 Havelock Sq; ☉8.30am-6pm Mon-Thu, 8.30am-5.30pm Fri, 8.30am-1pm Sat; 📍Chinatown).

### Raffles Hotel Arcade

MALL

(Map p478; [www.affles.com.sg](http://www.affles.com.sg); 328 North Bridge Rd; 📍City Hall) Part of the hotel complex, stylish Raffles Hotel Arcade is firmly upmarket, with designer clothes and accessories, watchmakers, galleries, wine sellers and similarly refined places gently tempting you into credit-card wantonness. You can shop for fashion-forward local threads and accessories at **Front Row** ([www.frontrowsingapore.com](http://www.frontrowsingapore.com); ☉noon-8pm Mon-Sat, noon-5pm Sun) and find contemporary Singaporean art at **Chan Hampe Galleries** ([www.chanhampegalleries.com](http://www.chanhampegalleries.com); ☉11am-7pm).

### Suntec City

MALL

(Map p478; [www.sunteccity.com.sg](http://www.sunteccity.com.sg); 3 Temasek Blvd; 📍Promenade, Esplanade) Vast Suntec has every-thing under the sun, plus 60 restaurants, cafes and several food courts. Its crowd-pulling Fountain of Wealth was once accorded the status of World's Largest Fountain in the *Guinness Book of Records*. Scan the media for one of Suntec's regular themed 'fairs', where you can pick up substantially discounted items such as cameras, electronics and computer gear.

### MICA Building

ART

(Map p478; 140 Hill St) This rainbow-shuttered colonial building houses a clutch of quality galleries, including **Art-2 Gallery** (Map p478; [www.art2.com.sg](http://www.art2.com.sg); ☉11am-7pm Mon-Sat), **Cape of Good Hope Art Gallery** (Map p478; [www.capeofgoodhope.com.sg](http://www.capeofgoodhope.com.sg)) and **Gajah Gallery** (Map p478; [www.gajahgallery.com](http://www.gajahgallery.com)), which showcases the best of Asia's vibrant contemporary art scene.

## CHINATOWN

### TOP CHOICE Utterly Art

ART

(Map p482; [www.utterlyart.com.sg](http://www.utterlyart.com.sg); Level 3, 20B Mosque St; ☉noon-8pm Mon-Sat, noon-5.30pm Sun; 📍Chinatown) This small, welcoming art gallery is an excellent introduction to Singapore's contemporary art scene. It's mostly paintings, although they exhibit sculpture and ceramics on occasion, and roughly half of the stuff on show is the work of Singaporean artists. They exhibit a lot of Filipino work, too. Call or check the website for what's on when you're in town.

### Far East Legend

ANTIQUES, HANDICRAFTS

(Map p482; 233 South Bridge Rd; ☉11.30am-6.30pm; 📍Chinatown) Squeeze inside this cluttered bolthole for an excellent collection of furniture, lamps, handicrafts, statues and other *objets d'art* from all over Asia. Expect anything from dainty porcelain snuff boxes to ceramic busts of Chairman Mao. The owner is usually willing to 'discuss the price'.

### Eu Yan Sang

CHINESE MEDICINE

(Map p482; [www.euyansang.com](http://www.euyansang.com); 269 South Bridge Rd; ☉8.30am-7pm Mon-Sat; 📍Chinatown) Get your *qi* back at this venerable peddler of Chinese medicines and tonics. You can consult a herbalist (from S\$12), or get off-the-shelf remedies such as instant bird's nest (to tone the lung) or deer's tail pills (to invigorate the kidneys). Most remedies also come with English instructions.

## Yue Hwa Chinese

### Products

DEPARTMENT STORE

(Map p482; [www.yuehwa.com.sg](http://www.yuehwa.com.sg); 70 Eu Tong Sen St; **M**Chinatown) Five floors of everything Chinese, from porcelain teapots and jade jewellery to slinky silk cheongsams, dried fish and medicinal herbs, fungi and spices. Pick up some ginseng, a snakeskin drum or a jar full of sea-horses for the road.

## LITTLE INDIA, BUGIS & KAMPONG GLAM



### Sifr Aromatics

PERFUME

(Map p486; [www.sifr.sg](http://www.sifr.sg); 42 Arab St; ☎11am-8pm Sun-Thu, 11am-9pm Fri & Sat; **M**Bugis) This Zen-like perfume laboratory belongs to third-generation perfume maker Johari Kazura, whose exquisite concoctions include the heady East (50ml S\$140), a blend of oud, rose absolute, amber and neroli. Perfumes range from S\$80 to S\$300 for 50ml, while vintage perfume bottles range from S\$60 to S\$2000. Those after a custom-made fragrance should call a day before their visit.

### Sim Lim Square

ELECTRONICS, MALL

(Map p486; [www.simlimsquare.com.sg](http://www.simlimsquare.com.sg); 1 Rochor Canal Rd; ☎11am-8pm; **M**Bugis) If you know what you're doing, there are real bargains to be had at this computer and electronics mega mall. The untutored, however, are more likely to be taken for a ride, so check the price at three vendors before bargaining hard. If it all sounds too difficult, opt for the cool 'n' cheap mobile phone and tablet covers.

### Little Shophouse

HANDICRAFTS

(Map p486; 43 Bussorah St; ☎10am-6pm; **M**Bugis) In his little workshop-cum-store, craftsman Robert Sng handbeads riotously colourful Peranakan slippers. Starting at around S\$300, each pair takes two months to complete, with many admirers simply framing the shoe covers as works of art in themselves. Beadwork aside, you can also stock up on Peranakan-style tea sets, crockery, vases, handbags and jewellery.

### Celebration of Arts

HANDICRAFTS

(Map p486; 2 Dalhousie Lane; ☎9am-9.30pm; **M**Little India) Dive into this treasure trove for beautiful Indian ornaments, statues, lampshades, cushions, bedspreads, furniture and pashmina shawls. Several larger items aren't displayed, so if you're looking for something in particular, ask the friendly owner.

## Mustafa Centre

DEPARTMENT STORE

(Map p486; [www.mustafa.com.sg](http://www.mustafa.com.sg); 145 Syed Alwi Rd; ☎24hr; **M**Farrer Park) As much cultural rite of passage as shopping experience, Mustafa's narrow aisles and tiny nooks have everything from electronics, clothing, toiletries, tacky clothes (lurid Bollywood shirts always make great presents), cheap DVDs, gold, moneychangers, a supermarket packed with Indian spices and pickles, and – on Sundays – half the population of Singapore.

## Bugis Street Market

MARKET

(Map p486; [www.bugis-street.com](http://www.bugis-street.com); Victoria St; ☎11am-10pm; **M**Bugis) Singapore's once infamous sleaze pit – packed with foreign servicemen on R&R, gambling dens and 'sisters' (transvestites) – is now its largest street market, crammed with cheap clothes, shoes, accessories, manicurists, food stalls and, in a nod to its past, a sex shop. Tiny **The Good Old Days** (Shop CSL/D4, Level 2; ☎noon-10pm) is famed for its 70s to 90s vintage frocks, handbags, jewellery, and vintage-inspired heels.

## ORCHARD ROAD

### ION Orchard Mall

MALL

(Map p490; [www.ionorchard.com](http://www.ionorchard.com); 430 Orchard Rd; **M**Orchard) Curvaceous, high-tech and striking, Ion is Singapore's hottest (and most photogenic) mall, packed with both high-end couture and more affordable 'It' labels like Paul Frank, G-Star, and True Religion. Shopped out? Recharge in the brilliant basement food court. The adjoining 56-storey tower comes with a top-floor observation deck, **ION Sky** ([www.ionsky.com.sg](http://www.ionsky.com.sg); observation deck ticket counter level 4; observation deck adult/child S\$16/8; ☎10am-noon & 2-8pm).

## Ngee Ann City

MALL

(Map p490; [www.ngeeanncity.com.sg](http://www.ngeeanncity.com.sg); 391 Orchard Rd; **M**Orchard) Housed in a downright ugly, brown-hued marble and granite building, Ngee Ann City redeems itself with seven floors of retail pleasure, where can't-afford luxury brands compete for space with the likes of **Kinokuniya** (Map p490; [www.kinokuniya.com.sg](http://www.kinokuniya.com.sg); 03-09/10/15), Southeast Asia's largest bookstore, and Japanese department store Takashimaya, home to the mouthwatering Takashimaya Food Village (p526).

## Blackmarket No. 2

FASHION

([www.theblackmarket.sg/blog](http://www.theblackmarket.sg/blog); 181 Orchard Rd, 02-10, Orchard Central; **M**Somerset) Hip, emerging Asian designers rule the racks at guys-and-gals Blackmarket No 2, among them Singapore's WanderWonder and Feist, the

## DON'T MISS

## HAJI LANE

Fashion fiends in search of fresher, lesser-known labels flock to Haji Lane, a pastel-hued strip in Kampong Glam lined with hipster-approved, one-off boutiques. **Dulcetfig** (Map p486; [www.dulcetfig.wordpress.com](http://www.dulcetfig.wordpress.com); 41 Haji Lane; ☎12.30-9pm Mon-Thu, 12.30-10pm Fri & Sat, 1-8pm Sun; 📍Bugis) sets female fashion bloggers into overdrive with its cool local and foreign frocks and accessories, which includes high-end vintage bags and jewellery. Fashion-literate guys should check out minimalist **K.I.N** (Map p486; 51 Haji Lane; ☎1-8pm Mon-Sat, 3-7pm Sun; 📍Bugis), where vintage-inspired shirts from Gitman Bros and design-centric bags from Makr sit beside K.I.N's own street-chic, preppy-cool threads and shoes.

Philippines' Gian Romano, Black Heart and Anthology, and Indonesia's Rebirth. Pick up anything from graphic tees and whimsically detailed shirts, to handcrafted shoes and jewellery. The store's centrepiece 'wooden shack' showcases a different designer every month.

## 313 Somerset

MALL

(Map p490; [www.313somerset.com.sg](http://www.313somerset.com.sg); 313 Orchard Rd; 📍Somerset) Hugely popular 313 has a great location above Somerset MRT Station and houses a cool, youthful mix of High St favourites like Zara, Uniqlo, Mango, GUESS and much-loved local women's label Mphosis. You'll also find music stores, restaurants, cafes, and the always-busy Apple shop EpiCentre. Coffee lovers can get a decent fix at Oriole Café & Bar, just outside the west entrance.

## Paragon

MALL

(Map p490; [www.paragon.com.sg](http://www.paragon.com.sg); 290 Orchard Rd; 📍Somerset) Even if you don't have a Gold Amex, strike a pose inside the Maserati of Orchard Rd malls. The Shop Directory reads like a Vogue index: Burberry, Bulgari, Gucci, Hermès, Jimmy Choo. Thankfully, mere mortals with a passion for fashion have a string of options, including Miss Selfridges, Calvin Klein Jeans, Banana Republic and Diesel.

## Tanglin Shopping Centre

MALL

(Map p490; [www.tanglinsc.com.sg](http://www.tanglinsc.com.sg); 19 Tanglin Rd; ☎9.30-9pm; 📍Orchard) This retro mall is *the* place for rugs, carvings, ornaments, jewellery,

paintings, furniture and the like. The fascinating **Antiques of the Orient** (Map p490; [www.aoto.com.sg](http://www.aoto.com.sg); ☎10am-6pm Mon-Sat, 11am-4pm Sun) is housed here, with its wonderful old books, photographs and genuinely ancient maps from all parts of Asia. You'll also find **Select Books** (Map p490; [www.selectbooks.com.sg](http://www.selectbooks.com.sg); ☎9.30am-6.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-4pm Sun), an Asian book specialist, as well as some decent Asian-food options.

## Mandarin Gallery

MALL

(Map p490; [www.mandaringallery.com.sg](http://www.mandaringallery.com.sg); 333a Orchard Rd; 📍Somerset, Orchard) Rehabilitate your wardrobe at this high-end, fashion-obsessed mall. Standout stores include Tokyo-based, boys-only **Bape Store** ([www.bape.com](http://www.bape.com); 02-02/03), which is famed for its pop-meets-hip hop-meets-preppy threads, sneakers and accessories in bold prints, luscious fabrics and playful detailing (think hoodies with 'monster' motifs). Female fashionistas shouldn't miss **Hansel** ([www.ilovehansel.com](http://www.ilovehansel.com); 02-14), domain of local designer Jo Soh and her chic, playful, vintage-inspired creations.

## Cathay Cineleisure Orchard

MALL

(Map p490; [www.cineleisure.com.sg](http://www.cineleisure.com.sg); 8 Grange Rd; 📍Somerset) Packed with enough candy, bubble tea and *kawaii* (cuteness) to pop a pimple, this Technicolor mall is home to a few edgy local designers. Unisex **Depression** ([www.depression.com.sg](http://www.depression.com.sg); 03-05A; ☎noon-10pm Sun-Thu, noon-midnight Fri & Sat) stocks playful, androgynous street-smart threads melding influences as diverse as Goth culture and kids' books. Guys should also check out the selection of bold tees, shirts and knits at neighbouring **Frederic Sai** ([www.fredericsai.com](http://www.fredericsai.com); 03-04B; ☎noon-10pm Sun-Thu, noon-11pm Fri & Sat).

## DEMPSEY ROAD &amp; HOLLAND VILLAGE

Dempsey Road, a former British Army barracks, is now a shopping precinct specialising in Kashmiri carpets, teak furniture and antiques.

## Shang Antique

ANTIQUES

([www.shangantique.com.sg](http://www.shangantique.com.sg); 16 Dempsey Rd; ☎10.30am-7pm; ☐7, 77, 106, 123, 174) Shang specialises in antique religious artefacts from Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, India and Burma, as well as reproductions; there are items in here dating back nearly 2000 years. Those with more style than savings can pick up beautifully embroidered silk shawls and

table runners from S\$35. Don't be afraid to ask for a 'good price'.


### Antipodean

FASHION

(www.antipodeanshop.com; 27A Lorong Mambong;  Holland Village) Cult Singaporean and Australian fashion labels rule at this sneaky boutique, hidden away above Harry's Bar. While men are limited to cool tees and jerseys from local outfitter Sundays, women are spoiled with a mix of flirtatious, sculptural threads from the likes of AL&ALICA, Fleur Wood, Rodeo Show and Hansel. Striking heels, creative handbags and artisan jewellery complete the picture.

### Holland Village Shopping Centre

MALL

(211 Holland Ave; ☎10am-8pm;  Holland Village) It might look stuck in 1986, but Holland Village Shopping Centre remains a magnet for expats and fashionable Singaporeans looking for art, handicrafts, homewares and offbeat fashion. Top billing goes to **Lim's Arts & Living** (02-01), packed with carvings, furnishings, stationary and Asian textiles. Shopped out? Hit the massage and reflexology peddlers on Level 3.

### EAST COAST

#### Kim Choo Kueh Chang

FOOD, HANDICRAFTS

(Map p492; 109 East Coast Rd; ☎10, 14, 16) Joo Chiat is stuffed with bakeries and dessert shops, but Kim Choo retains that old-world atmosphere, selling its traditional pineapple tarts and other brightly coloured Peranakan *kueh* (bite-sized snacks) from a wooden counter that looks more like an apothecary's shop. Head upstairs to catch artisans making traditional handicrafts and bag some Peranakan souvenirs.

## SINGAPORE SURVIVAL GUIDE

### Directory A-Z

#### ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation listings in this chapter quote the published hotel rates. This said, daily rates can fluctuate significantly at most midrange and top end hotels, where room rates are about supply and demand. Weekend rates and occupancy levels are higher than midweek. Rates are also higher during holidays and during major events such as the Formula One night race (book way ahead!).

Be aware that top hotels usually add a 'plus plus' (++) after the rate they quote you. The two pluses denote service charge and GST, which together amounts to an extra 17% on your room rate. Prices quoted are net prices ('net' includes taxes and the service charge).

Apart from booking directly on the hotel's website listed in our reviews, you can also book rooms on the following websites.

**Agoda** (www.agoda.com)

**Asiarooms** (www.asiarooms.com)

**Booking** (www.booking.com)

**Kayak** (www.kayak.com)

**Lonely Planet** (hotels.lonelyplanet.com)

#### BUSINESS HOURS

BUSINESS	STANDARD HOURS
Banks	9.30am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat
Bars	5pm-1am or 2am
Department Stores & Shopping Malls	10am or 11am-10pm
Hawker Centres	11am-10pm or 1am (sometimes 24hr)
Restaurants	11.30am-2.30pm & 6-10.30pm
Shops	10am-6pm

Many small shops, except those in Little India, close on Sunday. Any exception to these standard hours are noted in specific listings.

#### CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

» It is illegal to bring in the following items: chewing gum, firecrackers, drugs, pornography, gun-shaped cigarette lighters, endangered species or their byproducts, pirated recordings and publications, and toy currency and coins. Drug trafficking carries the death penalty.

» It is illegal to bring in tobacco unless you pay duty.

» The total limit on alcohol is 1L of wine, 1L beer and 1L spirits duty-free, or 2L of wine and 1L of beer (or 2L of beer and 1L of wine). There is no duty-free concession if you're arriving from Malaysia or have been out of Singapore for less than 48 hours.

» Take a letter from your doctor if you carry prescription medication.

## PRICE RANGES

Accommodation listings in this chapter are given one of the following price symbols:

**\$** less than S\$100

**\$\$** S\$100–250

**\$\$\$** more than S\$250

## DISCOUNTS

» Travellers arriving on Singapore Airlines or SilkAir are entitled to discounts at selected hotels, shops, restaurants, and attractions by presenting their boarding pass. See [www.singaporeair.com/boardingpass](http://www.singaporeair.com/boardingpass) for details.

» Children receive up to 50% discount at many tourist attractions, and children six and under are sometimes admitted free. Discounts are often available to visitors over 60. Present your passport or ID with your date of birth on it.

» The National Heritage Board's **3 Day Museum Pass** ([www.nhb.gov.sg/WWW/3daymuseumpass.html](http://www.nhb.gov.sg/WWW/3daymuseumpass.html); adult/family S\$20/50) offers unlimited admission to eight city museums, including the Asian Civilisations Museum, National Museum of Singapore and Singapore Art Museum. Passes can be purchased at the museums.

## ELECTRICITY

Plugs are of the three-pronged, square-pin type used in Malaysia and the UK (see p594 for an illustration). Electricity runs at 230V and 50 cycles.

## EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

For a full list of foreign embassies and consulates in Singapore, go to <http://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-in/Singapore>.

**Australia** (☎6836 4100; [www.australia.org.sg](http://www.australia.org.sg); 25 Napier Rd)

**Canada** (☎6854 5900; [www.singapore.gc.ca](http://www.singapore.gc.ca); #11-01, 1 George St)

**France** (☎6880 7800; [www.ambafrance-sg.org](http://www.ambafrance-sg.org); 101-103 Cluny Park Rd)

**Germany** (☎6533 6002, emergency 9817 0414; [www.singapur.diplo.de](http://www.singapur.diplo.de); #12-00 Singapore Land Tower, 50 Raffles Pl)

**Indonesia** (☎6737 7422; [www.kemlu.go.id/singapore](http://www.kemlu.go.id/singapore); 7 Chatsworth Rd)

**Ireland** (☎6238 7616; [www.embassyofireland.sg](http://www.embassyofireland.sg); #08-00 Liat Towers, 541 Orchard Rd)

**Malaysia** (☎6235 0111; [www.kln.gov.my/web/sgp\\_singapore](http://www.kln.gov.my/web/sgp_singapore); 301 Jervois Rd)

**Netherlands** (☎6737 1155; <http://singapore.nlam.bassade.org>; #13-01 Liat Towers, 541 Orchard Rd)

**New Zealand** (☎6235 9966; [www.nzembassy.com/singapore](http://www.nzembassy.com/singapore); Tower A, 15-06/10 Ngee Ann City, 391A Orchard Rd)

**Thailand** (☎6737 2475; [www.thaiembassy.sg](http://www.thaiembassy.sg); 370 Orchard Rd)

**UK** (☎6424 4200; <http://ukinsingapore.fco.gov.uk>; 100 Tanglin Rd)

**USA** (☎6476 9100; <http://singapore.usembassy.gov>; 27 Napier Rd)

## EMERGENCY

Useful emergency numbers:

**Ambulance/Fire** (☎995)

**Police** (☎999)

## FOOD

The following price ranges – used throughout this chapter – refer to the cost of a standard starter, main course and soft drink.

» **\$** less than S\$10

» **\$\$** S\$10–30

» **\$\$\$** more than S\$30

For in-depth information about the region's food culture, turn to p579.

## GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Sex between males is illegal in Singapore, carrying a minimum sentence of 10 years. In reality, nobody is ever likely to be prosecuted and LGBT Singaporeans celebrate their pride each August with the multifaceted festival **IndigNation** ([www.facebook.com/IndigNationSG](http://www.facebook.com/IndigNationSG)). There are also numerous LGBT bars and clubs, several of which are located in Chinatown.

A good place to start looking for information is on the websites of **Utopia** ([www.utopia-asia.com](http://www.utopia-asia.com)) or **Fridae** ([www.fridae.com](http://www.fridae.com)), both of which provide excellent coverage of venues and events across Asia. Singaporeans are fairly conservative about public affection, though it's more common to see displays of familiarity among lesbian couples these days. A gay male couple doing the same would definitely draw negative attention.

## INTERNET ACCESS

» In this guide, the internet symbol (☎) is used where hotels have business centres or dedicated computers for guest use. The



wi-fi symbol (☎) is used for places where wireless internet is available.

» Every top hotel has internet access and will help get you set up if you bring your own laptop. The backpacker hostels all offer free internet access and wi-fi.

» Changi Airport has numerous free internet terminals.

» You will find free wi-fi hotspots in many of Singapore's shopping malls.

» SingTel ([www.singtel.com.sg](http://www.singtel.com.sg)), StarHub ([www.starhub.com](http://www.starhub.com)) and M1 ([www.m1.com](http://www.m1.com)) are local providers of broadband internet via USB modem dongles. Bring your own or buy one from them. You can get prepaid data SIM cards if you have your own dongle.

» Internet cafes are increasingly rare in Singapore. Most double as gaming centres and charge around S\$3 to S\$5 per hour.

## LEGAL MATTERS

Singapore's reputation for harsh laws is not undeserved: don't expect any special treatment for being a foreigner. Police have broad powers and you would be unwise to refuse any requests they make of you. If you are arrested, you will be entitled to legal counsel and contact with your embassy. Don't even think about importing or exporting drugs. At best, you'll get long jail terms; at worse, you'll get the death penalty.

Smoking is banned in most public places, including shopping and entertainment centres, restaurants, hawker centres and food courts, public transport, taxis, and within a 5m radius of most building entrances. The maximum fine for first time offenders is S\$1000. You can smoke on the street (as long as you put your butt in the bin).

Jaywalking (crossing the road within 50m of a designated crossing) could cost you S\$50, while littering could set you back S\$1000.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

Singapore's medical institutions are world class and generally cheaper than private healthcare in the West. This said, travel insurance cover is advisable. Check with insurance providers what treatments and procedures are covered before you leave home. Note that local GPs also dispense medication on premises, saving you a trip to the pharmacy.

Your hotel or hostel should be able to direct you to a local GP; there are plenty around.

## Raffles Medical Clinic

MEDICAL

(☎6311 1111; [www.affleshospital.com](http://www.affleshospital.com); 585 North Bridge Rd; ☎24hr; ☑Bugis) A walk-in clinic at the Raffles Hospital.

## Singapore General Hospital Accident & Emergency Department

HOSPITAL

(☎6321 4311; [www.sgh.com.sg](http://www.sgh.com.sg); Level 2, Block 1, Outram Rd; ☑Outram Park) Located in Block 1 of this big compound.

## EMERGENCY ROOMS

The following operate 24-hour emergency rooms:

**Gleneagles Hospital** (☎6735 5000; [www.gleneagles.com.sg](http://www.gleneagles.com.sg); 6A Napier Rd; ☑7, 75, 77, 105, 106, 123, 174)

**Mount Elizabeth Hospital** (☎6735 5000; [www.mountelizabeth.com.sg](http://www.mountelizabeth.com.sg); 3 Mt Elizabeth Rd; ☑Orchard)

**Raffles Hospital** (☎6311 1111; [www.affleshospital.com](http://www.affleshospital.com); 585 North Bridge Rd; ☑Bugis)

## MONEY

The unit of currency is the Singapore dollar (comprising 100¢). There are 5¢, 10¢, 20¢, 50¢ and S\$1 coins, while notes come in S\$2, S\$5, S\$10, S\$50, S\$100, S\$500 and S\$1000 denominations.

## ATMS

Cirrus-enabled machines are widely available throughout Singapore, including shopping malls and MRT stations.

## CREDIT CARDS

Credit cards are widely accepted, except at local hawkers and food courts. Note that smaller stores might charge you an extra 2% to 3% for credit card payments. For card cancellations or assistance, contact the following:

**American Express** (☎6396 6000, local calls only 1800 299 1997; [www.americanexpress.com/sg](http://www.americanexpress.com/sg))

**Diners Club** (☎6571 0128; [www.dinersclub.com.sg](http://www.dinersclub.com.sg))

**MasterCard** (☎1800-110 0113; [www.mastercard.com](http://www.mastercard.com))

**Visa** (☎1800-448 1250; [www.visa.com.sg](http://www.visa.com.sg))

## CHANGING MONEY

Banks change money, but virtually nobody uses them for currency conversion because the rates are better at the moneychangers dotted all over the city. These tiny stalls can be found in just about every shopping centre (though not necessarily in the more

## PRACTICALITIES

- » English dailies in Singapore include the broadsheet *Straits Times* (which includes the *Sunday Times*), the *Business Times*, and the afternoon tabloid *New Paper*.
- » Singapore has seven free-to-air channels, including the English-language Channel 5 and okto. English-language radio stations include the BBC World Service (88.9FM), Gold (90.5FM), Symphony (92.4FM), 938LIVE (93.8FM), Class (95FM) and 987FM (98.7FM).
- » Singapore uses the metric system.

modern malls). Rates can be haggled a little if you're changing amounts of S\$500 or more.

### TAXES & REFUNDS

A 7% goods-and-services tax (GST) is applied to all goods and services. There are tax and service charges that apply to room rates. Restaurants charge 17% extra on top of listed prices (7% GST, 10% service charge and a 1% CESS charge).

Visitors purchasing goods worth S\$300 or more through a shop participating in the GST Tourist Refund Scheme (look for the 'Tax-Free Shopping' logo) can apply for a GST refund. When you purchase an item, fill in a claim form and show your passport. You'll receive a global refund cheque – present it with your passport and goods at the Customs GST inspection counter in the departure hall at Changi *before* you check in. You can then cash your cheque at counters inside the airport, or have credited to your credit card or bank account. Pick up a *How to Shop Tax-free in Singapore* brochure at the airport or visitors centres for more information.

### TIPPING

Tipping is largely unnecessary and unexpected in restaurants due to the 10% service charge automatically added to your bill. Some restaurants voluntarily omit the charge, leaving a tip to your discretion. Tipping in taxis and hawker centres is not expected. Elsewhere a thank-you tip for good service is discretionary.

### TELEPHONE

Country code	☎65
International access code	☎001
Directory Assistance	☎100
Flight information	☎1800-542 4422
STB Tourist Line	☎1800-736 2000

There are no area codes within Singapore; telephone numbers are eight digits unless you are calling toll-free (1800).

You can make local and international calls from public phone booths. Most phone booths take phonecards. Singapore also has credit card phones that can be used by running your card through the slot.

Calls to Malaysia (from Singapore) are considered to be STD (long-distance or trunk) calls. Dial the access code 020, followed by the area code of the town in Malaysia that you wish to call (minus the leading zero) and then your party's number. Thus, for a call to 346 7890 in Kuala Lumpur (area code 03) you dial 02 3346 7890. Call 109 for assistance with Malaysian area codes.

### MOBILE PHONES

In Singapore, mobile phone numbers start with 9 or 8. You can buy a local SIM card for around S\$18 (including credit) from post offices, convenience stores and local telco stores – by law you must show your passport to get one. The main local telcos:

**SingTel** ([www.singtel.com.sg](http://www.singtel.com.sg))

**StarHub** ([www.starhub.com](http://www.starhub.com))

**M1** ([www.m1.com](http://www.m1.com))

### PHONECARDS

Local phonecards are widely available from 7-Eleven stores, post offices, SingTel centres, stationers and bookshops. There's also a small thriving phonecard stall outside the Centrepoint shopping centre on Orchard Rd, but check which countries they service before you buy.

### POST

Postal delivery in Singapore is very efficient. Call 1605 to find the nearest branch or check [www.singpost.com.sg](http://www.singpost.com.sg).

### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

**New Year's Day** 1 January

**Chinese New Year** January/February  
(two days)

**Good Friday** April (variable)

**Labour Day** 1 May

**Vesak Day** May (variable)

**National Day** 9 August

**Deepavali** October/November (variable)

**Hari Raya Puasa** (variable)

**Christmas Day** 25 December

**Hari Raya Haji** (variable)

#### SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

In Singapore there's a week's holiday towards the end of March, four weeks in June, one week in early September, and a long break from the end of November until the beginning of January.

#### TIME

Singapore is eight hours ahead of GMT/UTC (London).

When it is noon in Singapore, it is 4am in London, 5am in Paris, 2pm in Sydney, 8pm (previous day) in Los Angeles and 11pm (previous day) in New York. Note that these times may vary during daylight savings periods. Singapore itself does not observe daylight savings.

#### TOILETS

Toilets in Singapore are Western-style. Public toilets are usually very clean and readily available at shopping malls, hotel lobbies and at tourist attractions.

#### TOURIST INFORMATION

The **Singapore Tourism Board** (STB; ☎1800-736 2000, 6736 2000; [www.yoursingapore.com](http://www.yoursingapore.com)) provides the widest range of services, including tour bookings, event ticketing and a list of Singapore Tourism offices around the world. It has visitor centres at **Changi Airport** (☉Terminals 1 & 2 6am-midnight, Terminal 3 6am-2am) and **ION Orchard** (Level 1, ION Orchard Mall, 2 Orchard Turn; ☉10am-10pm; 🅂Orchard).

#### TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

In recent years, a major government campaign has seen ramps, lifts and other facilities progressively installed around Singapore. The pavements in the city are nearly all immaculate, although the crowded narrow footpaths of Little India and Chinatown can prove challenging to anyone with mobility, sight or hearing issues. MRT stations all have lifts and some buses and taxis are equipped with wheelchair-friendly equipment.

The **Disabled People's Association** (☎6899 1220; [www.dpa.org.sg](http://www.dpa.org.sg)) offers informa-

tion on accessibility in Singapore, as well as links to the country's numerous disability organisations.

#### VISAS

Citizens of most countries are granted 30-day visas on arrival by air or overland (though the latter may get 14-day visas). The exceptions are the Commonwealth of Independent States, Myanmar, India, Pakistan, and most Middle Eastern countries. Visitors must have a valid passport or internationally recognised travel document valid for at least six months beyond the date of entry into Singapore. Extensions can be applied for, in person or online, through the **Immigration & Checkpoints Authority** (☎6391 6100; [www.ica.gov.sg](http://www.ica.gov.sg); 10 Kallang Rd; 🅂Lavender). Keep in mind that applications take at least a day to process.

#### WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Singaporean women enjoy a high degree of autonomy and respect, and the city is one of the safest destinations in Southeast Asia – though women might be a little uncomfortable in Little India during the weekends, when tens of thousands of male migrant workers throng the area. Tampons, over-the-counter medications and contraceptive pills are readily available.

## Transport

#### GETTING THERE & AWAY

Singapore is a major air hub, serviced by both full-service and budget airlines. The city-state has excellent and extensive regional and international flight connections, making it an ideal stopover city. You can also catch trains to Malaysia and Thailand. A slew of comfortable, privately run buses also run through Malaysia up to Thailand. Book flights, tours and rail tickets online at [lonelyplanet.com/bookings](http://lonelyplanet.com/bookings).

#### AIR

Singapore's location and excellent facilities have made it a natural choice as a major Southeast Asian aviation hub, with direct services all over the world.

#### AIRPORTS & AIRLINES

Most planes will land at one of the three main terminals or the Budget Terminal at **Changi Airport** (☎6595 6868, flight information 1800-542 4422; [www.changiairport.com](http://www.changiairport.com)), located around 20km east of the city centre. Regularly voted the world's best airport, Changi

## SINGAPORE TRANSPORT CONNECTIONS

DESTINATION	AIR	BUS	TRAIN
<b>Kuala Lumpur</b>	1hr /from S\$30	4-5hr/from S\$20	6-7hr/from S\$34
<b>Penang</b>	1hr 20min/from S\$40	9-10hr/from S\$45	9hr/from S\$60

Airport is vast, efficient and amazingly well organised. Among its many facilities you'll find free internet, courtesy phones for local calls, foreign-exchange booths, medical centres, left luggage, hotels, showers, a gym, swimming pool and of course, plenty of shops.

Changi Airport is the home base of Singapore's highly esteemed national carrier, **Singapore Airlines** (☎6223 8888; www.singaporeair.com; 04-05 ION Orchard Mall, 2 Orchard Turn) and its subsidiary regional carrier **SilkAir** (☎6223 8888; www.silkair.com; 17-08, 371 Beach Road).

It is also serviced by the following six budget airlines, which often offer extremely cheap deals within the region if booked well in advance. Routes change all the time, so check the websites.

**Air Asia** (☎6307 7688; www.airasia.com)

**Berjaya Air** (☎6227 3688; www.berjaya-air.com)

**Cebu Pacific** (☎3158 0808; www.cebupacificair.com)

**Firefly** (☎Malaysia +603 7845 4543; www.firefly.com.my)

**Jetstar** (☎1800-852 9507; www.jetstar.com)

**Tiger Airways** (☎6808 4437; www.tigerairways.com)

#### LAND

The Causeway linking Johor Bahru (JB) with Singapore handles most traffic between the countries. Trains and buses run from all over Malaysia straight through to Singapore, or you can get a taxi or bus to/from JB. There's also a crossing called the Second Link linking Tuas, in western Singapore, with Geylang Patah in Malaysia – some buses to Melaka and Malaysia's west coast head this way. If you have a car, tolls on the Second Link are much higher than the Causeway.

#### BUSES

Buses run frequently from Singapore into Malaysia, some continuing to Thailand. If you are travelling beyond Johor Bahru (JB) in Malaysia, the simplest option is to catch a bus straight from Singapore, though there

are more options and lower fares travelling from JB.

While long-distance bus terminals include **Queen Street Bus Terminal** (cnr Queen & Arab Sts) and **Lavender St Bus Terminal** (cnr Lavender St & Kallang Bahru), a large number of buses depart from the **Golden Mile Complex** (5001 Beach Road), where you'll also find a plethora of bus agencies selling tickets (shop around). You can also book online at www.busonlineticket.com. You can check the latest prices and book tickets with the following companies:

**Aeroline** <sup>BUS</sup>  
(☎6258 8800; www.aeroline.com.sg; 02-52 HarbourFront Centre, 1 Maritime Square) Coaches to Kuala Lumpur and Penang departing from HarbourFront Centre.

**First Coach** <sup>BUS</sup>  
(☎6822 2111; www.firstcoach.com.my; 03-33 Novena Square, 238 Thompson Rd) Daily buses to Kuala Lumpur departing from Novena Square. Some services depart from The Plaza and West Coast Plaza.

**Grassland Express** <sup>BUS</sup>  
(☎6293 1166; www.grassland.com.sg; 01-26 Golden Mile Complex, 5001 Beach Rd) Daily buses to Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Meleka, Perak and numerous other destinations.

**Transtar Travel** <sup>BUS</sup>  
(☎6299 9009; www.transtar.travel; 5001 Beach Rd, 01-12 Golden Mile Complex) Luxury coaches to Kuala Lumpur, Genting, Ipoh and Penang.

#### TRAIN

Singapore is the southern terminus for the Malaysian railway system, **Keretapi Tanah Melayu** (KTM; www.ktmb.com.my).

Malaysia has two main rail lines: the primary line goes from Singapore to Kuala Lumpur (KL), Butterworth, Alor Setar and then into Hat Yai, Thailand; the second branches off at Gemas and continues through the centre of the country to Tumpat, near Kota Bharu on the east coast.

Note that the art deco railway station in Singapore was closed for private redevelopment

in 2011. The KTM train to Malaysia now runs out of the **Woodlands Train Checkpoint** (11 Woodlands Crossing; 170, Causeway Link from Queen St).

Three express trains depart every day to Kuala Lumpur roughly around 8am, 1pm and 10.30pm, and take six and seven hours; check the website for connecting train timings. You can book tickets either at the station or via the KTM website ([www.ktm.my](http://www.ktm.my)).

Finally, the luxurious **Eastern & Oriental Express** (6395 0678; [www.orient-express.com](http://www.orient-express.com)) departs Singapore on the 42-hour, 1943km journey to Bangkok before heading onwards to Chiang Mai and Nong Khai (for Laos). Don your linen suit, sip a gin and tonic, and dig deep for the fare: from S\$3737 per person in a double compartment to S\$7462 in the presidential suite. You can go as far as KL or Butterworth for a lower fare.

#### SEA

The following main ferry terminals run services to Malaysia and/or Indonesia:

**Changi Point Ferry Terminal** (6546 8518; 1 Tanah Merah, then 2) Located 200m north of the bus terminal.

**Harbourfront Cruise & Ferry Terminal** (6513 2200; [www.singaporecruise.com](http://www.singaporecruise.com); 1 HarbourFront)

**Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal** (6513 2200; [www.singaporecruise.com](http://www.singaporecruise.com); 35, 1 Tanah Merah)

#### FERRIES TO RIAU ARCHIPELAGO (INDONESIA)

Direct ferries run between Singapore and the Indonesian islands of Pulau Batam, Pulau Bintan and Pulau Karimun Besar in the Riau Archipelago. The ferries are modern, fast and air-conditioned. The main companies include these ones:

**BatamFast** FERRY  
(6270 0311; [www.batamfast.com](http://www.batamfast.com)) Ferries to Batam Centre, Sekupang, and Waterfront City depart from Harbourfront Ferry Terminal. Ferries to Nongapura depart from the Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal.

**Berlian Ferries** FERRY  
(6546 8830) Ferries to Pulau Batam depart from Harbourfront Ferry Terminal.

**Bintan Resort Ferries** FERRY  
(6542 4369; [www.brf.com.sg](http://www.brf.com.sg)) Ferries to Bandar Bintan Telani depart from Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal.

**Indo Falcon** FERRY  
(6542 6786, 6278 3167; [www.indofalcon.com.sg](http://www.indofalcon.com.sg)) Ferries to Pulau Batam depart from Harbourfront Ferry Terminal. Ferries to Tanjung Pinang in Bintan depart from Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal.

**Sindo Ferries** FERRY  
(6271 4866; [www.sindoferry.com.sg](http://www.sindoferry.com.sg)) Ferries going to Batam Centre and Sekupang, Tanjung Balai and Waterfront City depart from Harbourfront Ferry Terminal. Ferries to Tanjung Pinang depart from the Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal.

## GETTING TO MALAYSIA: SINGAPORE TO JOHOR BAHRU

**Getting to the border** The easiest way to reach the border is on the 'Singapore-Johore Express' bus (S\$2.40; one hour, every 15 minutes from 6.30am to 11pm), which departs from the Queen Street Bus Terminal in Little India. The quickest way is to catch the MRT to Kranji, then bus 160 to the border. The cheapest (and slowest) way is on bus 170 (S\$1.90, every 10-15 minutes from 5.20am to 12.10am), which also leaves from Queen Street Bus Terminal. Try to avoid crossing back into Singapore on Sunday nights, when traffic is hellish. Shared taxis also depart for Johor Bahru (JB) from the Queen Street Bus Terminal.

**At the border** At the Singapore checkpoint, disembark from the bus with your luggage, go through immigration, and reboard the next bus (keep your ticket). After repeating the process on the Malaysian side, it's a quick walk into central JB. Alternatively, bus 160 terminates at JB's Kotaraya Bus Terminal. Both Bus 170 and the 'Singapore-Johore Express' bus terminate at Larkin Bus Terminal, inconveniently located 5km north of the Causeway.

**Moving on** From Larkin Bus Terminal, long-distance buses depart to numerous Malaysian destinations, including Melaka, KL and Ipoh.

See p232 for details on doing the trip in the opposite direction.



Destination	Singapore Ferry Terminal	Journey Time	Cost
Bandar Bintan Telani (Pulau Bintan)	Tanah Merah	55min	S\$25.45
Batam Centre (Pulau Batam)	Harbour-Front	1hr	S\$31
Nongsapara (Pulau Batam)	Tanah Merah	45min	S\$31
Sekupang (Pulau Batam)	Harbour-Front	45min	S\$29
Tanjung Balai (Karimun Besar)	Harbour-Front	1hr 35min	S\$40
Tanjung Pinang (Pulau Bintan)	Tanah Merah	1hr 50min	S\$31

### GETTING AROUND

Singapore is the easiest city in Asia to get around. The TransitLink Guide – S\$2.80 from MRT ticket booths and Kinokuniya book store (p535) – lists all MRT and bus routes and includes maps showing the surrounding area of all MRT stations. For online bus information, which includes the useful IRIS service (which offers live next-bus departure times), see [www.sbstransit.com.sg](http://www.sbstransit.com.sg) or download the 'SBS Transit iris' Smartphone app. For train information, see [www.smrt.com.sg](http://www.smrt.com.sg).

### BICYCLE

Singapore's roads are not for the faint-hearted. It's furiously hot, and drivers tend to be fast, aggressive and not particularly sympathetic to the needs of cyclists. Fortunately, there's a large network of parks and park connectors and a few exceptional dedicated mountain-biking areas – at Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, Tampines and Pulau Ubin. Cycling up to Changi Village and then taking the bike over to Pulau Ubin is an excellent adventure. Other great places for cycling include East Coast Park, Sentosa Island, Pasir Ris Park and the route linking Mt Faber Park, Telok Blangah Hill Park and Kent Ridge Park.

If you have your own bike, be aware that it's not allowed on public transport unless it's a fold-up bike. You can take fold-up bikes on trains and buses during these hours: Monday to Friday 9.30am–4pm & 8pm onwards; all-day Saturday and Sunday and public holidays. Note that only ONE fold-up bike is allowed on buses at all times, so you might as well ride if you have to.

### A WORD OF WARNING

Some travellers have had problems leaving Malaysia if they've entered the country by train from Singapore. Malaysian immigration officials at Singapore's railway station sometimes don't stamp your passport – not a problem as long as you keep your immigration card and your train ticket to show how you entered Malaysia. Your details will have been put into the Malaysian immigration computer and should come up when you exit. Stand your ground if you're asked to pay a fine.

If you haven't brought your own, pick up some wheels at [Treknology Bikes 3](http://www.treknology3.com) (☎6732 7119; [www.treknology3.com](http://www.treknology3.com); 01-02, 91 Tanglin Place; 24hr hire S\$35-50; ☀11am-7.30pm Mon-Sat, 11.30am-3pm Sun). Bikes can also be rented at several places along East Coast Parkway, on Sentosa Island and Pulau Ubin, with adult prices ranging from S\$5 on Pulau Ubin to S\$12 on Sentosa.

### BOAT & FERRY

There are regular ferry services from [Marina South Pier](http://www.marinasouthpier.com.sg) (☎6275 03888; 31 Marina Coastal Dr; ☐Marina Bay, then ☐402) to other southern islands (p543) and from Changi Point Ferry Terminal (p543) to Pulau Ubin.

### BUS

Singapore's extensive bus service is clean, efficient and regular, reaching every corner of the island.

The two main operators are [SBS Transit](http://www.sbstransit.com.sg) (☎1800-287 2727; [www.sbstransit.com.sg](http://www.sbstransit.com.sg)) and [SMRT](http://www.smrt.com.sg) ([www.smrt.com.sg](http://www.smrt.com.sg)). Both offer similar service. For information and routes, check the websites. Bus fares range from S\$1 to S\$2.10 (less with an EZ-Link card). When you board the bus, drop the exact money into the fare box (no change is given), or tap your EZ-Link card or Tourist Pass on the reader as you board, then again when you get off.

MRT also runs seven NightRider bus routes between the city and various suburbs on Friday and Saturday nights from 11.45pm to 3.45am. SBS runs six Nite Owl weekend routes between midnight and 2am. See the websites for route details.

### TOURIST BUSES

[SIA Hop-On](http://www.siahopon.com) (☎9457 2896; [www.siahopon.com](http://www.siahopon.com); 1-day ticket for SIA passengers adult/child S\$6/3,

non-passengers S\$12/6) Singapore Airlines' tourist bus traverses the main tourist arteries every 30 minutes daily, starting opposite Marina Square on Raffles Blvd at 9am, with the last bus leaving at 7.35pm and terminating at Raffles Hotel at 8.55pm. Buy tickets from the driver and see the website for route details.

**City Hippo** (☎6338 6877; www.ducktours.com.sg; 24hr Singapore Sightseeing Pass (incl river cruise) adult/child S\$33/23) offers a confusing array of tour options round all the major sites. There are numerous pick-up points around town. See the website for tour options.

#### CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Singaporeans drive on the left-hand side of the road and the wearing of seat belts is compulsory. Traffic is orderly though aggressive driving, tailgating, speeding and lane-changing without signalling is very common. The profusion of one-way streets and streets that change names (sometimes several times) can also make driving stressful. The *Mighty Minds Singapore Street Directory* is essential for negotiating the city.

Motorcycles are held in very low esteem. Some drivers display almost no regard for bike safety. Be alert when riding.

#### DRIVING LICENCE

If you plan on driving in Singapore, bring your current home driver's licence. Some car hire companies may also require you to have an international driving permit.

#### HIRE

If you want a car for local driving only, it's worth checking smaller operators, whose

rates are often cheaper than the big global rental firms.

If you're going into Malaysia, you're better off renting in Johor Bahru, where the rates are significantly lower (besides, Malaysian police are renowned for targeting Singapore licence plates).

Rates start from around S\$60 a day. Special deals may be available, especially for longer-term rental. Most rental companies also require that drivers are at least 23 years old.

All major car-hire companies have hire booths at Changi Airport. There are other offices around Singapore:

**Avis** (☎6737 1668; www.avis.com.sg; 01-07 Waterfront Plaza, 390A Havelock Rd)

**Express Car** (☎6748 9963; www.expresscar.com.sg; 1 Sims Lane)

**Hawk** (☎6469 4468; www.hawkrentacar.com.sg; 32A Hillview Terrace)

**Hertz** (☎6542 5300, 6542 5300; www.hertz.com.sg; Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 2 & 3)

**Premier** (www.singapore.com/premier; 03-05 Balmoral Plaza, 271 Bukit Timah Rd)

#### RESTRICTED ZONES & CAR PARKING

Between 7.30am and 7pm weekdays, and from 10.15am to 2pm Saturdays, the area encompassing the CBD, Chinatown and Orchard Rd becomes a restricted zone. Cars may enter but they must pay a toll. Vehicles are automatically tracked by sensors on overhanging gantries that prompt drivers to insert a cashcard (available from 7-Elevens and petrol stations) into their in-vehicle unit. The toll is extracted from the card. The

### AIRPORT-CITY CONNECTIONS

MODE	AIRPORT TERMINALS	DESTINATION	COST	FREQUENCY
Train (MRT)	2 & 3	Extensive island coverage (interchange at Tanah Merah station)	varies, Orchard Rd S\$2.10	every 12 mins, 5.30am-11.18pm
Taxi	All terminals	Anywhere	varies, around \$18 to \$35 (most expensive between 5pm and 6am)	
Bus 36	All terminals	Orchard Rd & Colonial District	S\$1.80	every 5-15 mins, 6.09am-midnight
Airport Shuttle	All terminals	Any hotel (Sentosa and Changi Village hotels excluded)	adult/child S\$9/6	every 15-30 mins, 24hrs

## TRISHAWS

Trishaws peaked just after WWII when motorised transport was practically nonexistent and trishaw drivers could make a tidy income. Today there are only around 250 trishaws left in Singapore, mainly plying the tourist routes. Trishaws have banded together and are now managed in a queue system by **Trishaw Uncle** (☎9012 1233; [www.trishawuncle.com.sg](http://www.trishawuncle.com.sg); Queen St btwn Fu Lu Shou Complex & Albert Centre Market; rides from S\$39).

You can also find freelance trishaw riders outside Raffles Hotel and outside the Chinatown Complex.

same system is also in operation on certain expressways. Rental cars are subject to the same rules.

Parking in the city centre is expensive, but relatively easy to find – almost every major mall has a car park. Outdoor car parks and street parking spaces are usually operated by the government – you can buy booklets of parking coupons, which must be displayed in the window, from post offices and convenience stores. Many car parks are now run using the same in-vehicle unit and cashcard and ERP gantries instead of the coupon system.

### MASS RAPID TRANSIT (MRT)

The ultraclean, safe and efficient Singapore **MRT** (☎1800-336 8900; [www.smrt.com.sg](http://www.smrt.com.sg)) subway and light-rail system is the most comfortable and hassle-free way to get around Singapore. Trains run from around 5.30am to midnight, departing every three to four minutes at peak times and every six to eight off-peak. It consists of four lines: North–South, North–East and East–West, and the Circle Line. More lines are set to open between now and 2020. MRT map and trip planner available online: [www.smrt.com.sg](http://www.smrt.com.sg).

### FARES & FARE CARDS

Single-trip tickets cost from S\$1.20 to S\$2.20 (plus a S\$1 refundable deposit), but if you're using the MRT a lot it can become a hassle buying and refunding tickets for every journey.

Much more convenient is the **EZ-link card** ([www.ezlink.com.sg](http://www.ezlink.com.sg)). Costing S\$12 (which includes a S\$5 nonrefundable deposit) and available from the customer service windows at MRT stations, it's valid on all buses and trains and will save you up to 30% on fares. The card can also be bought from 7-Eleven stores for S\$10 (which includes a S\$5 nonrefundable deposit). Cards can be topped up with cash or ATM cards at station ticket machines.

Alternatively, a **Singapore Tourist Pass** ([www.thesingaporetouristpass.com](http://www.thesingaporetouristpass.com)) offers unlimited train and bus travel (S\$8 plus a S\$10 refundable deposit) for one day.

### TAXI

You can flag down a taxi any time, but in the city centre taxis are not allowed to stop anywhere except at designated taxi stands. Finding a taxi during peak hours, at night, or in the rain is harder than it should be.

The fare system is also complicated, but thankfully it's all metered, so there's no haggling over fares. The basic flagfall is S\$3 to S\$3.40, then 22¢ for every 400m. There are a raft of surcharges to note, among them:

- » 50% of the metered fare from midnight to 6am.
- » 25% of the metered fare between 6am and 9.30am Monday to Friday, and 6pm to midnight daily.
- » S\$3 city area surcharge from 5pm to midnight.
- » S\$2.30 to S\$8 for telephone bookings.
- » S\$3 on all trips from the CBD between 5pm and midnight, Monday to Saturday.

You may also have to pay another surcharge if you take the taxi into the CBD during restricted hours (S\$5 from 5pm to midnight Friday to Sunday; S\$3 all other times for journeys from the airport) and credit card payments incur a 10% surcharge.

Confused? We are too. Just follow the meter and ask for a receipt to check charges.

If you need a taxi, contact one of the following companies:

**Comfort Taxi and CityCab** (☎6552 1111)

**Premier Taxis** (☎6363 6888)

**SMRT Taxis** (☎6555 8888)

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